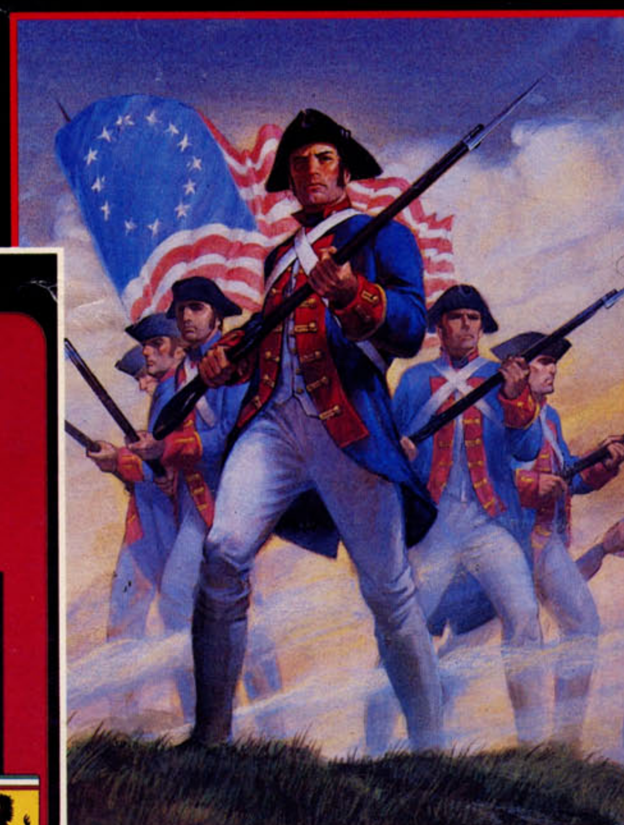
COMPUTER Gaming World

April 1988
Number 46
$3.50

Special Sports Survey



EA's Ferrari Formula One



SSI's Sons of Liberty

Also In This Issue:
Strike Fleet • Dungeon Master
Police Quest • Infocom's Sherlock



HOT. MEAN. RADIO-ACTIVE.



AUGUST 20, 2087

Nothing could be worse than this god-forsaken, radioactive desert.

More Sniperdroids! All tracking me with them death glares. And them Uzis. They're weird trigger-twitchin' folks. I suspect it's them poisoning the water.

Or maybe it's those Leather Thugs. Heck, I don't know anymore. I heard they have a bunch of civilians cut off east of Ranger Center, which is where I'm headed. Hope not. They want me dead. Like every other mutant this side of Vegas.



The worst part is, I'm getting to be as bad as they are. You wouldn't believe some of the ways I've learned to kill. I hang out in sewers, and my best friend is a MAC 17 submachine gun.

Gramps talked about life before the nuclear war. All I know is I don't want others living this way. Gotta rebuild this desert right. Gotta make it so you can sleep with your eyes closed.

WASTELAND. A new role-playing game from the creators of the Bard's Tale™ series.

3 WAYS TO ORDER: 1) Visit your retailer. 2) Call 800-245-4525 from U.S. or Canada, 8am to 5pm PST to order by VISA/MC. 3) Mail check (U.S.$) or VISA/MC #, cardholder name, and exp. date to Electronic Arts Direct Sales, P. O. Box 7530, San Mateo, CA 94403. Apple II version $49.95, plus $3 shipping/handling. CA residents add 6.5% sales tax. Allow 1–3 weeks for U.S. delivery.

ELECTRONIC ARTS

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FEATURES

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DEPARTMENTS

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Psalm 9:1-2

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TAKING A PEEK

Accolade
20813 Stevens Creek Blvd.
Cupertino, CA 95014

POWER AT SEA: In simulating the Battle of Leyte Gulf (October 23-27, 1944), Accolade has chosen to use a hybrid action/strategy approach. The large U. S. fleet has been abstracted into three ships (battleship, carrier, and troop carrier). Action sequences allow players to fly fighter missions, engage in ship-to-ship surface combat, man anti-aircraft guns, and use the ship's main guns to bombard enemy bases. Strategy sequences involve monitoring communications, navigating, and determining optimal battle plans (i.e. use of air power or surface power). C-64/128 ($29.95). Circle Reader Service Card #1.

Cosmi
415 N. Figueroa
Wilmington, CA 90744

SUPER HUEY II: This sequel to the realistic Super Huey offers six scenarios which use the versatile helicopter in distinctive ways. These include combat scenarios where the player must dogfight against another copter or engage surface ships in the Middle East; fight brush fires in Southern California or become the chopper pilot version of Red Adair during an oil blaze; or experience the bizarre atmosphere of the Bermuda Triangle. C-64/128 ($19.95). Circle Reader Service Card #2.

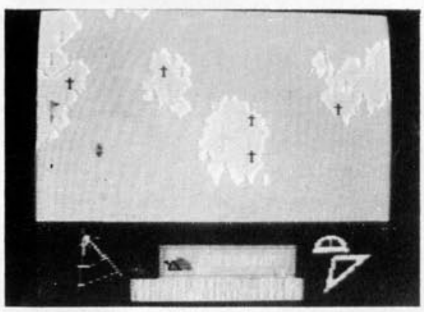
Data East
470 Needles Drive
San Jose, CA 95112

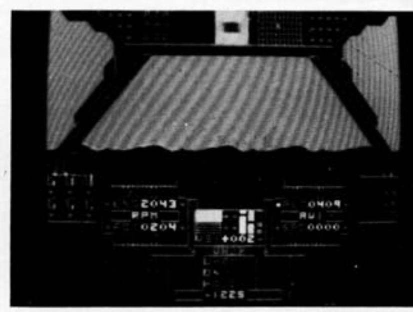
Q*BERT: Poor Q*bert, he has successfully made the switch from coin-op arcade to home computer, but still has to face those "@!#?&" snakes, marbles, and beasties. At a budget price, he may be changing the colors of pyramids on your computer screen in the near future. C-64/128 ($9.95). Circle Reader Service Card #3.

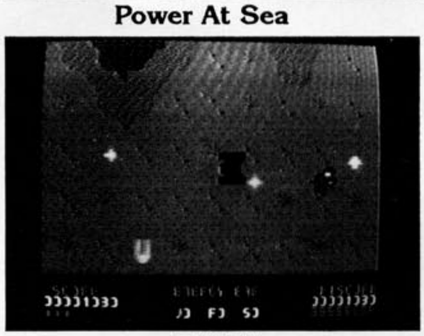
TNK III: From the arcade screen to your screen, another budget-priced coin-op conversion puts the player in charge of an experimental super tank. As an armored juggernaut, the

(Continued on page 6)

Advertisers


Power At Sea


Super Huey II


TNK III



Hunt For Red October



Return To Atlantis



First Expedition

(Continued from page 4)

TAKING A PEEK

player can crunch enemy tanks, anti-tank guns, and guerilla infantry. C-64/128 ($9.95). Circle Reader Service Card #4.

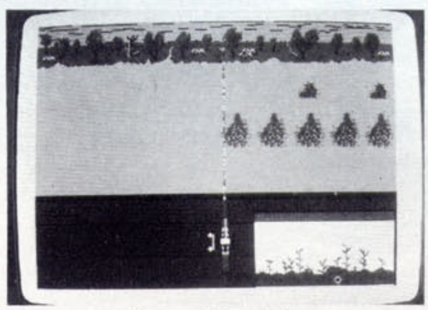
DataSoft
19808 Nordhoff Place
Chatsworth, CA 91311

HUNT FOR RED OCTOBER: Navigate "Gorshkov's Railroad" and attempt to evade detection by both NATO and Soviet forces in this computer game based on Tom Clancy's bestselling novel. The graphics, particularly the contour map of the seabed which represents a sonar-generated map, are pleasant and the icon-driven menu is user-friendly. Weapon choices, sonar activity, analysis of hydrophonics, choices of route, use of periscope and ESM (Electronic Surveillance Manual) to gather intelligence, and power/drive options provide the decision points. Amiga, Atari ST and IBM ($49.95). Circle Reader Service Card #5.

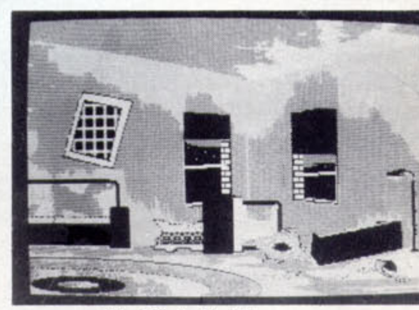
Electronic Arts
1820 Gateway Drive
San Mateo, CA 94404

RETURN TO ATLANTIS: This long-awaited adventure game combines elements of the Atlantis mythos, "Sea Hunt," and "James Bond" in its storyline. The player becomes an agent of "The Foundation," a group that functions like Greenpeace with teeth. Agents are

(Continued on page 51)



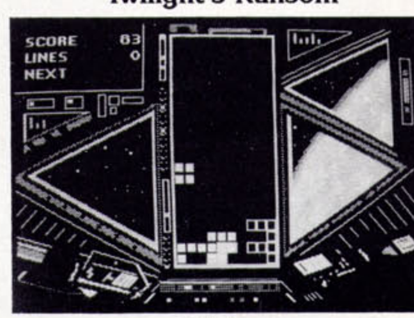
Gone Fishin'



Twilight's Ransom



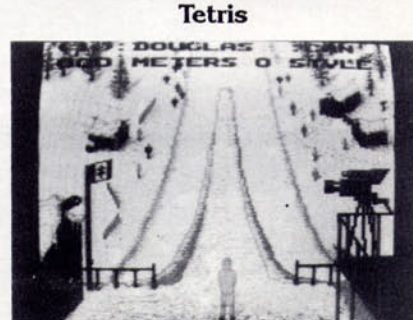
Jinkster



Tetris



Zig Zag



Winter Challenge

HARDENING OF THE ART OF WAR

Thank you for publishing your recent review of the *Ancient Art of War at Sea* by Regan Carey. I am pleased to find that he enjoyed the product. I am writing to address an issue that he raised in reference to the lack of hard disk support by **Broderbund**, specifically for this product.

Both the *Ancient Art of War at Sea* and its predecessor, the *Ancient Art of War*, can be installed on a hard disk by the user. Through an oversight, we did not include the instructions for this procedure in the manual, so I can understand how a user might assume that the program does not support the hard disk.

To remedy this, we are including an addendum to both manuals describing the hard disk installation procedure in every new package that is being shipped. The following is the text for the addendum (combined here for both versions):

INSTRUCTIONS FOR HARD DISK INSTALLATION

If your computer has a hard disk, you can install the Ancient Art of War/War at Sea on it by performing the following steps:
1. Start up your computer using DOS 2.0 or higher.
2. Set your active drive and the current working directory to the location where you would like to install the Ancient Art of War/War at Sea (for example C:\AAW or C:\AAWS). If you need more information on creating or using directories, please consult your DOS manual.
3. Insert the Ancient Art of War/War at Sea disk in drive A and close the drive door.
4. Type COPY A:*.* and press ENTER. This will copy all of the files from the Ancient Art of War/War at Sea disk onto your hard disk.

To run the program from the hard disk, make sure the Ancient Art of War/War at Sea floppy disk is in drive A and the C prompt is displayed on the screen (if it isn't, type C: and press ENTER, then type WAR or WAS and press ENTER.

The copy protection scheme for the Ancient Art of War/War at Sea requires that the original floppy disk be in drive A when the program initially starts up. Once the title page is displayed, you may remove the floppy disk from drive A.

Ed Badasov
Broderbund Software
San Rafael, CA



Too Much is Not Enough

I am extremely disappointed in the last several issues of *CGW*. They have all been very dull. Each issue always has the same things in it: a several page review of at least two wargames and a several page review of an adventure game, such as the three page review of *Wizard's Crown II* [*Eternal Dagger*] in the October '87 issue. That large review gave away many things that are fun for players to discover on their own.

I'm disappointed that the machine specific columns are gone. You say that games are now released on four or more machines, but all the reviews you print, except for adventure and wargames, are for the C-64. You may not know this, but the Apple versions of some games do differ from the C-64.

Another thing, whatever happened to good old "reviews?" You know, the two or three paragraphs that gave the plot, graphic and sound quality, and whether the game was good or bad. All this magazine has is two to three **page** reviews that tell too much! The increase in price has not brought an increase in quality.

Bill Elvey
Grand Rapids, MI

We believe that our audience is composed of wargamers, strategy gamers, adventure gamers, and action gamers. You are correct to note that we try to have a similar mix of long reviews in each issue. That is part of our editorial policy in an attempt to meet all of our subscribers' needs, regardless of what the "theme" of the issue is. You are also correct that we do not intend to revive the machine specific columns. To do so would steal space from those who are more interested in game concept, content, strategy, and design than appearance, sound, and interface. We really do know that games play with slight differences from machine to machine, but they also play differently within the machine categories themselves. Should we have an IBM with CGA card column, IBM with EGA column, and IBM with VGA column? Some games which play on the Amiga 1000 do not work with the Amiga 2000 and some games which play on the Atari 1040 ST do not play on the Mega ST (according to some of our readers). Should we have Apple II with speed-up card reviews? There are simply too many variations out there for a non-machine specific magazine to cover. Further, while our mix of coverage is not perfect, we do not review C-64 games to the exclusion of others.

As for "good old reviews," we simply do not believe that two to three paragraphs is adequate coverage on most games (although that may be all we have room for in some of our survey articles). As for giving too much away, we really do try to warn readers when we are getting into hint territory. In fact, "Scorpion's Tale" and "Scorpion's Mail" are both hint columns with no apology offered.

More Filling, Looks Great!

I am a loyal reader of *Computer Gaming World* and I think it is the best computer magazine on the market today. This is probably a little late, but the cover looks great! Although I was a little surprised when the price went up, it didn't stop me from the buying of your magazine. I make nearly 99.9% of my game purchases after reading about it in a review or article. And I always find that the games are as good as the review says it is.

Eric Campbell
Altamont, NY

Thanks, Eric. It's nice to be able to balance the negative with the positive.

INSIDE THE INDUSTRY

News, Notes and Quotes From the Computer Entertainment Industry

"The Print Shop" Passes Million Mark

Broderbund Software has officially announced that *The Print Shop*, the genre-creating graphics program has sold more than one million copies. Gary Carlston, vice-president of the company, believes that the product foreshadowed desktop publishing. According to the software publisher, the average sales of this one title comprised 4% of the entire U.S. software market in 1987.

LATEST VIRAL STRAINS HIT THE COMPUTER WORLD

Last December the **IBM** world was invaded by a computer virus which accessed the address files in the personal computers of which accessed IBM's worldwide network. Designed as a Christmas greeting, the insidious routine allegedly turned the computers into an electronic chain letter producers which provided users with enough Christmas tree graphics to deluge the network and slow productivity to a snail's crawl.

The **Amiga** world has also been infected by a similar but more destructive prank. The Amiga virus, a worm or "Trojan horse" program which allegedly originated in Europe, writes code to the first block on an Amiga disk. The disk appears to operate normally, but transfers the "infection" routine into memory. The virus has been reported to occasionally print the message, "Something wonderful has happened. Your AMIGA is alive! And, even better, some of your disks are infected by a VIRUS!" After the virus has been introduced to memory, any unprotected Workbench disk will catch the virus. Public domain programs are especially susceptible to the virus, but the South County Amiga Club (in Southern Los Angeles County) discovered after a recent Amiga exposition that the virus can be found on commercial disks, as well. **Commodore**'s customer support network has the details about diagnosing this ailment and curing it for those who have "infected" computers. Meanwhile, the safest plan is to "cold boot" rather than use the "warm boot" procedure.

On March 2, 1988, a new strain of Macvirus is expected to hit the Macintosh world (on the anniversary of the Macintosh). The Macvirus is supposed to carry a message of "World Peace" and is attributed to *MacMag*, a Canadian publication hitherto unconnected to terrorist activity.

Datasoft President Denies Alternate Reality Demise

In response to allegations made over the GEnie Information Network by Phil Price (designer of *Alternate Reality: The City*) that *Alternate Reality: The Dungeon* would be the last release in the series, **Datasoft** President Samuel Poole denied the assertion. In a recent interview with *CGW*, the executive alluded to Price's claim that Poole had stated that computer role playing games would be passe' by 1989 as both false and absurd. Poole stated that he had not talked with Price in over a year. As for the series, Poole stated that the company is going ahead with *Alternate Reality: The Arena*. The product is designed and ready for programming. He asserted that the only thing that would prevent the release of AR: The Arena would be interference from the licensors, **Paradise Programming**.

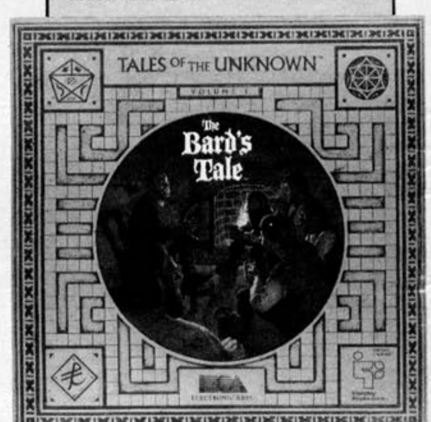
In other news, Poole revealed that the Commodore 64/128, Amiga and ST versions of *Global Commander* should be out by second quarter of 1988, with the IBM and Atari 8-bit to follow in that quarter. Global Commander is the geopolitical game which forces players to act as diplomat and supreme military commander for their country during a global power play.

MICROPROSE HEARING STILL STALLED IN WEST GERMANY

Microprose is still awaiting its "day in court" with regard to the ban of some of its titles under the "Law Against Publication and Distribution of Products and Media That Corrupt the Young". The long-anticipated December 10, 1987 hearing (reported in *CGW* #42) was, once again, inconclusive. The *Gunship* decision has been postponed, but the commission (*Bundesprufstelle Fur Jugendgefahrdende Schriften* (BPS)/"Federal Office for Examination of Harmful Publications") has indicated that they are looking into the difference between arcade and simulation games. This may be extremely difficult as none of the BPS officials is computer literate. The BPS claimed on October 1, 1987 that the time wasted by computer failures and technical difficulties during demonstrations of

"The Bard's Tale" Developers Affiliate with Activision

Brian Fargo, President of **Interplay Productions** (developers of *The Bard's Tale* series, *Wasteland*, *Borrowed Time*, and others) have joined the **Affiliated Publishers** ranks at **Activision**. According to Fargo, the company's first project under the new agreement will be based on William Gibson's *Neuromancer*. It will be a skill-based role-playing game and features a soundtrack by DEVO. Another product will be the company's first Amiga original. Fargo noted that Interplay will be doing one other original product for **Electronic Arts**, as well as complete several conversions for EA.



Rumored Activision/Infocom Rift Unfounded

At press time, a plethora of rumors concerning the relationship between **Infocom** and its parent company, **Activision**, garnered the attention of *CGW*. **Rumor:**There was considerable innuendo that the Infocom division had become a dumping ground for unwanted Activision projects. As a case in point, the move of *Infocomics* from Activision's provenance to that of Infocom's supervision was cited. The suggestion was made that there were problems between Tom Snyder and Activision which lead to the move. **Response:** A contract was originally signed between Activision, under then president James Levy, and Tom Snyder Productions for the two companies to develop the product which has become Infocomics. However, a product development decision was made to move *all* story-telling projects to Infocom, early on in Bruce Davis' administration. Tom Snyder, whose company is geographically located less than a mile from Infocom's headquarters, was delighted with the change. He noted that the only problems they had in working with Activision were logistic problems in that the companies were located a continent apart. He further stated, "Our relationship with Infocom is the best we've ever had with any publisher." Bruce Davis, Activision President, stated unequivocally that "Nothing was shunted off on anybody" and responded to the charge that Infocom was being forced to work on secondary projects by insisting "Infocom is an A+ line, not a B line!"

Rumor: It was suggested to CGW that Activision felt that Infocomics were not good enough from a technical standpoint and that the parent company was not pleased with the product. **Fact:** Activision's president has personally boosted Infocomics more than any other products in recent appearances. **Rumor:** An assertion that Infocomics had not been tested adequately came to CGW's attention. **Response:** Infocom realized early on that the broad base of testers used to playtest their interactive fiction games would not be useful in testing this new genre. This was because these testers had little in common with the target audience on the new product. Therefore, the company had to build a new base of testers. Nevertheless, Infocom President Joel Berez insists that the products were "extensively tested." This is confirmed by Tom Snyder who notes that "We had to *learn* how to test a product of this nature."

Rumor: CGW was presented with an allegation that Infocom was told that they needed to sell 50,000 units of Infocomics prior to March 31, 1988 (end of Activision's fourth fiscal quarter) in order for the company to break even. **Response:** Knowing that publicly held Activision must be very concerned about its financial image during this fiscal year of turn around, this charge had to be addressed. Bruce Davis responded to CGW's query with a chuckle. He suggested that the company would make less than $6.00 on each Infocomic unit sold and dismissed any suggestion that less than $300,000 worth of business would make the difference in a given fiscal quarter. "If less than $300,000 makes that much of a difference, we're in real trouble," scoffed Davis. Joel Berez was more serious and emphatically denied that Infocom needed to sell 50,000 units to make or break their division's financial outlook for the fourth quarter. Loretta Stagnitto of Activision suggested that four other divisions would have a greater impact on the bottom line for the fourth quarter. These would be: a) Activision's Nintendo products, b) Activision's Hypercard line, c) British Telcom's **Firebird** products, and d) the success of Triton Products (the mail order merchandising division). If all four of these areas meet expectations, the financial outlook for Activision could be exceptional.

Rumor: CGW was told that Activision was forcing Infocom to produce a *Wizardry* clone. **Response:** Neither Berez nor Davis will talk to CGW about unannounced products. However, Berez waxed philosophical in response to this question, explaining "Infocom's role in life is to become the master storyteller and that includes products begun on the West Coast." In fact, Berez noted that Infocom has recently hired their first producer to acquire outside products. This is consistent with Davis' presentation at the Activision Press Conference in Las Vegas where he divided the corporation's entertainment emphases into three basic areas with Infocom's responsibilities being in the area of storytelling.

Rumor: Several sources have indicated that there are projects currently underway to put graphics in Infocom's traditional interactive fiction games. **Response:** Infocom is attempting to find appropriate ways to use graphics in *all* their new products. Berez contends that this is not an attempt to "colorize" the classic Infocom games with graphics, but an attempt in the new products " . . . to renew excitement in the field of interactive fiction and introduce new consumers to the games." Recognizing that some purists will resent these changes, Berez suggested that there would possibly be an option to toggle the graphics off. He also admitted, "This is where it gets really hard, because we have to make sure when we add in the new elements that everything that used to be there is still there."

the product did not allow sufficient time to examine the case in its totality. It appears that the committee has no intention of resolving the question expeditiously.

In addition, **Microprose** intends to appeal the finalized ban on *Silent Service* through the West German judiciary system. This process may take as long as seven years to resolve and will possibly take the case through the Higher Administrative Court of Munster and the Federal Administrative Court in Berlin.

Polarware Brings Spy in for the Gold

Polarware, Inc., publishers of the educational and entertaining *The Spy's Adventures Around the World* series, has been presented

with a **Parents' Choice Gold Award** for both the educational adventure series and the *Sesame Street Crayon Series*. The **Parents' Choice Foundation** annually publishes the winners selected by a panel of parents, children, educators, and computer experts. *The Spy's Adventures* . . . are family-oriented games for players over eight years old. They are graphic adventures which are particularly useful in teaching geography (see the review in *CGW* #42, p. 35). *The Sesame Street Crayon Series*, developed in conjunction with **Children's Television Workshop**, includes: *Letters for You*, *Numbers Count*, and *Opposites Attract*.

Corporate Profits in Computer Industry Surging Upward

Commodore International Limited reported a profit of $6.3 million dollars ($.20 per share) on revenues of $173.9 million for its first fiscal quarter (ending on 9/30/87). The company confirms that this is a 70% increase over the same period in the last fiscal year. C.E.O. Irving Gould stated that the profits result from higher unit volumes in the Amiga product line. "This is attributable to the successful introduction of the Commodore Amiga 500 and the Commodore Amiga 2000 during the June quarter."

Activision, Inc. experienced a 30% increase in revenues during its second fiscal quarter. The company earned a $1.5 million profit ($.04 per share) on revenues of $11.3 million for the quarter. Further, **Electronic Arts** concluded its best-ever fiscal year in 1987 with net revenue of more than $30 million.

Another indication of health in the entertainment software industry is the percentage increase of employees hired by the software publishers. Most of the entertainment companies increased their total number of employees during 1987. The table in the previous column gives a rundown by company:

Number of Employees Per Company

Company	3rd Quarter '87	4th Quarter '86	% Change
Accolade	21	18	+16.7%
Activision	158	158	0.0%
Broderbund	166	160	+3.8%
Electronic Arts	180	120	+50.0%
Epyx	80	52	+53.8%
Mindscape	123	74	+66.2%
ShareData	45	40	+12.5%
Sierra Online	85	66	+28.8%
Strategic Simulations	50	30	+60.0%

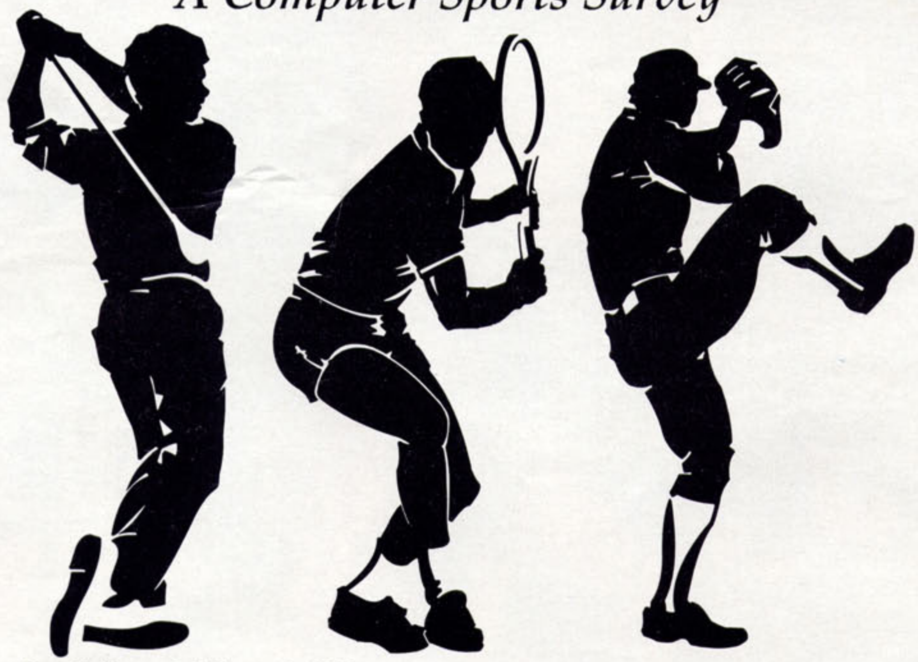
MasterPlay Announces First Product

The new company formed by Andrew Greenberg, author of *Wizardry*, has announced that their initial release will be entitled *Starsaga I: Beyond the Boundary*. The game will attempt to use a combination of board-computer-role playing concepts and forge a new genre, tentatively titled "Participation Drama." The game should be versatile enough to accommodate one to six players with a total of one to six characters. The company's plan is to release *Starsaga II* within another year and *Starsaga III* within two years.

Circle Reader Service #18 »

THE BOYS OF SPRING

A Computer Sports Survey



by David M. and Johnny L. Wilson

Those gentle breezes and bright warm days may be upon us, but some of these spring days will have enough April showers to keep us inside until the May flowers. That's when it's nice to be able to lean back, boot up your favorite sports simulation, and compete in a computerized version of that athletic event you would like to be playing or you would like to be better at. Your computer screen can become your fields of glory—day or night, rain or shine.

No Missing Links (Golf)

Mean 18 (**Accolade**): This may be the ultimate professional golf simulation. Outstanding graphics and sound are its hallmarks. Players view themselves from an oblique overhead perspective behind the animated character. The program also offers an overview perspective of the hole with graphic representations of each shot to that point (and a fabulous sound effect, too!).

Mean 18 comes packaged with Pebble Beach, St. Andrews, Augusta National golf courses, as well as a Course Architect program for designing one's own course. Three additional course disks ($19.95 each) enable one to play, in Volume II, Inverness Club (Ohio), Turnberry (Scotland), and Harbour Town (South Carolina); in Volume III, Las Colinas (Texas), Olympic Club (San Francisco), and Muirfield (Scotland); and in Volume IV, Castle Pines (Colorado), Doral Country Club (Florida), and Kapalua (Hawaii). The game supports IBM ($39.95), Apple IIGS, Amiga, and Atari ST ($44.95).

One to four players can compete on these famous courses without worrying about having to let anyone play through. Better players may handicap themselves by using professional distance tees and/or experienced level. Poorer players may use regulation distance tees and the beginner level (i.e. the computer acts as caddy to recommend the best club). The beginner automatically gets perfect aim, but the program is very unforgiving for the experienced player.

A vertical power gauge is employed to set the backswing and address the ball. Strategy involves aim and club selection. Putting requires the same timing, but the strategy is restricted to reading the green and estimating one's stroke.

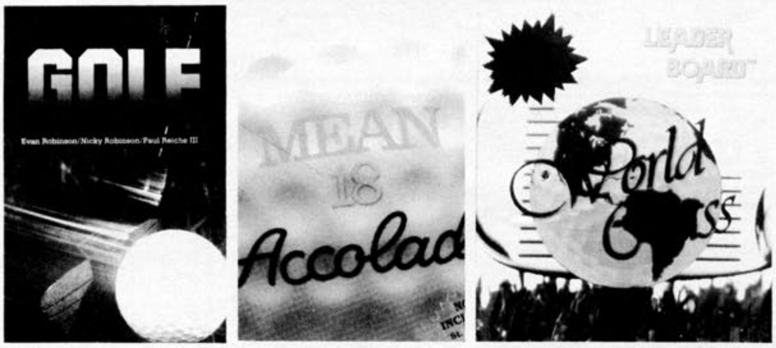
World Class Leader Board (**Access**): This game offers a similar perspective to Mean 18. It involves a vertical power graph and offers the same overhead oblique perspective. In common with the former, it offers St. Andrews and Doral Country Clubs, while adding Cypress Creek with its thick forested rough (some players will spend as much time in the trees as Paul Bunyan) and a fictional course called The Gauntlet. Like Mean 18, World Class Leader Board (WCLB) also offers course disks at $19.95. These only contain two courses as opposed to the three on the Mean 18 disks. Comparable to Mean 18, WCLB allows from one to a foursome to compete. The graphics on the C-64 are marvelous and the sound of a ball hitting a tree is very authentic (and we know from experience).The product also advertises a Course Editor, but unlike the Course Architect in Mean 18 which allows players to design their own courses, this program only allows players to rearrange the holes which already exist on the disk. The game supports Apple II and C-64 ($39.95) with IBM promised soon.

The major difference between Mean 18 and WCLB is the way the program handles putting on the professional level. WCLB does not show the player how much force is being applied on the power graph. Instead, the professional player is expected to have an intuitive grasp of the extent of his stroke. This is a very challenging facet of the game.

World Tour Golf (**Electronic Arts**): The split-screen perspective of this game offers both a bird's-eye view of each hole and the same overhead oblique perspective of the other two games. The mechanics involve a circular power gauge for setting the backswing and addressing the ball. Less experienced players (or those with poor dexterity) may simply choose the amount of power desired and the program will assume the ball has been addressed squarely. Unlike Mean 18 and WCLB, World Tour Golf (WTG) does not contain complete courses on the game disk. Instead, the most challenging holes from 17 different courses and five fictional holes are included. There are no additional course disks available. The game supports the C-64 ($29.95), Apple IIGS, and IBM ($39.95).

Like Mean 18, there is a construction set included. Unlike the products mentioned earlier where the golfers have identical characteristics, WTG players must design a player (or use the built-in

Jack Snicklaus) with attributes for: drive distance (strength), drive accuracy (consistency), drive tendency (to hook or slice), and recovery skill (ability to get out of bad lies). IBM owners with CGA used to have to play with magenta trees and blue fairways, but a revision has corrected that aesthetic problem and supports EGA, as well. The EGA version still offers only the four best colors, however.



Body and Seoul (Summer Olympics)

If you cannot go for the gold in Seoul, Korea, this summer, you can certainly enter the arcade versions of several Olympic events. Both of the following games offer superb graphics and sound, are as close to their coin-op predecessors as it is possible to be, and provide an outstanding value at $14.95. The games support the Apple II and C-64.

Hypersports (**Konami**): The game begins with a stirring version of "Chariots of Fire" and offers six Olympic-style events: swimming, skeet shooting, long horse, archery, triple jump, and weightlifting. Each event is played in the order listed above and must be successfully completed in succession in order to continue on to the next event. This may be challenging, but since tastes and abilities differ, a menu approach would have been more user-friendly and a practice option would have been most welcome. Nevertheless, the game is a fast-paced joystick buster which will delight arcade fanatics. Four of the six events are built around quick left and right movements of the joystick. The other two, archery and triple jump, rely on timing.

Track and Field (**Konami**): Like its sister game, this product also offers six Olympic-style events: 100 Meter Dash, Long Jump, Javelin Throw, 110 Meter Hurdles, Hammer Throw, and High Jump. Once again, players must qualify in each event in order to proceed to the next event. However, Track and Field does allow players to select and practice in a single event. The game also allows the player to select from four different difficulty levels (unlike Hypersports). Also, while Hypersports is a solitaire game, Track and Field allows from one to four players to compete. Again, the game is primarily a joystick buster. All of the events require swift and intense left-right movement to build up speed, but most require a precision timing in addition to that action. The timing involves holding down the fire

button until the split-second when the optimal angles of "attack" are set (a la **Microsoft**'s out-of-print *Olympic Decathlon*.

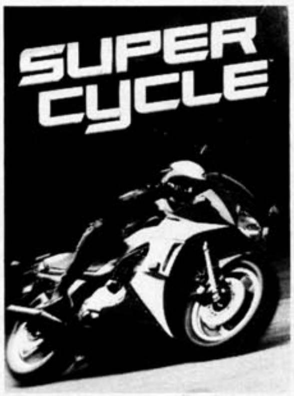
Pixel Pugilists (Boxing)

Star Rank Boxing II **Activision (Gamestar)**: This sequel to *Star Rank Boxing* is visually more attractive than the original release (even the IBM in CGA mode looks good) and offers improved joystick control over the original. Winning or losing the game is primarily dependent upon one's hand-eye coordination, but there are more strategic decision points than in many action-oriented sports games. Players create a boxer from random statistics, select the training regimen in three areas (speedbag, heavy bag, sparring, and running). Speedbag training increases accuracy, heavy bag improves strength, sparring time improves strategy, and road work improves strength and agility. The game supports the C-64 ($29.95), Apple II and IBM ($39.95).

Players fight by positioning their joysticks according to the eight switch positions on the stick. There are five offensive positions (left hook, jab, right cross, body shot, and uppercut) and three defensive maneuvers (duck, lean, and cover up). To win, players must use appropriate defensive strategy to counter their opponent's punches and take offensive action, as well as keep tabs on the knockout indicator. All of this happens with such speed and facility that the fight takes on all the intensity of a real bout for the player(s).

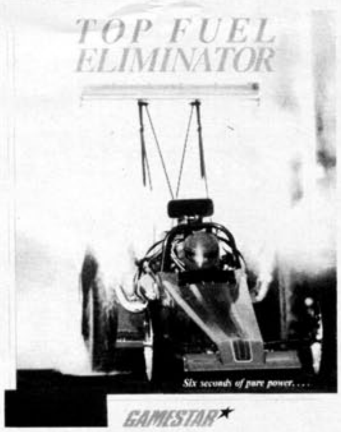
When Life Is The Pits (Motor Sports)

In addition to *Ferrari Formula One* which is previewed elsewhere in this issue, there are several motor sports games on the market. Most are simply arcade entities like *Pole Position, Speed Buggy*, or *Outrun*, however. If one likes arcade racing, **Epyx**' *Supercycle* for the Atari ST and C-64/128 ($39.95) is a pleasing translation of the coin-op motorcycle racing hit. If you would rather race over authentic courses, **Broderbund**'s *Superbike Challenge* (Atari ST, C-64, IBM - $19.95) features 12 authentic courses (including Bugatti, Misano, Salzburgring, and Silverstone among others) and three difficulty levels.











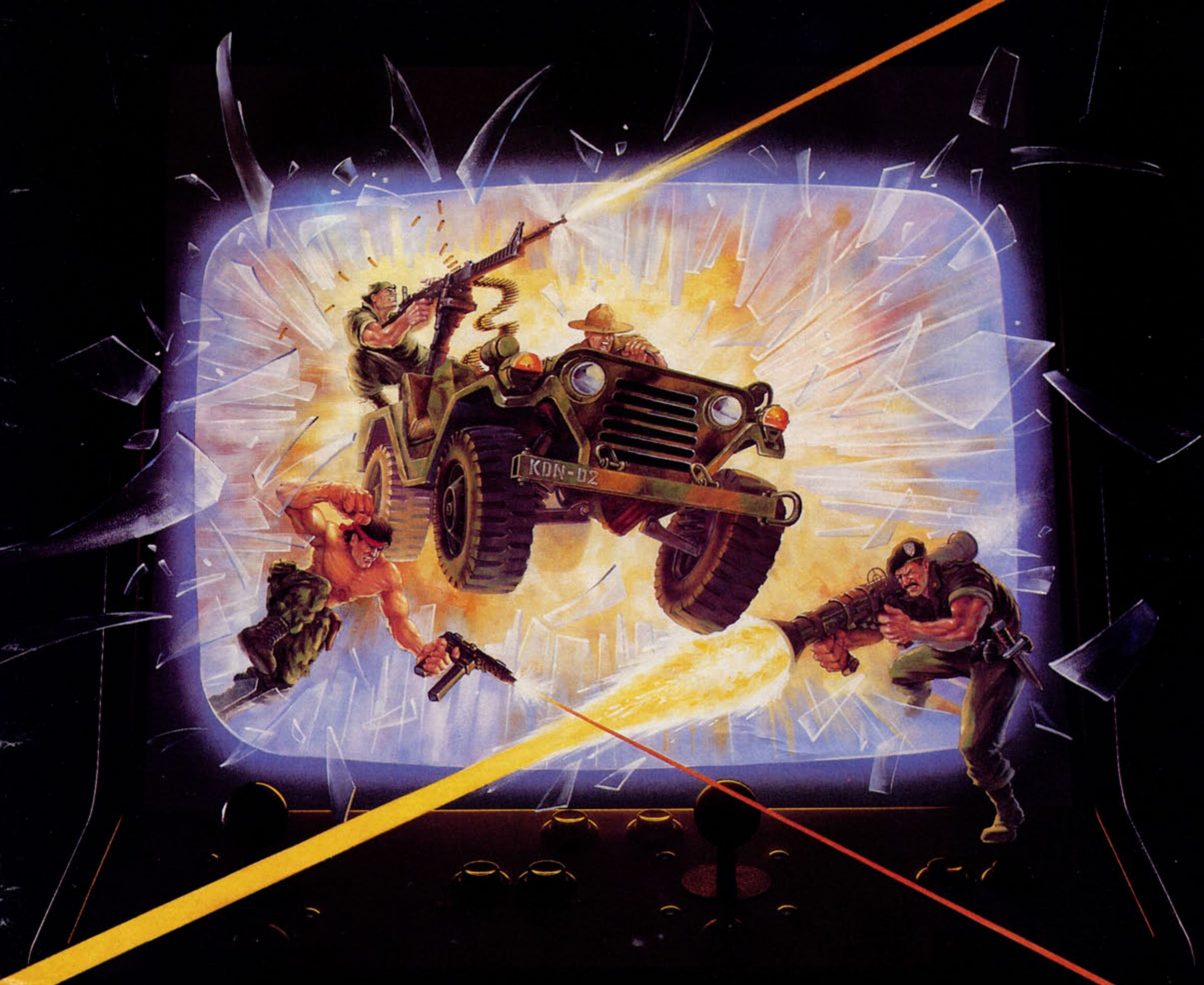
If you prefer a thinking man's simulation, two drag racing products might meet your needs. **Cosmi** offers *Shirley Muldowney's Top Fuel Challenge* (TFC) for the C-64/128 ($24.95) and **Activision**'s **Gamestar** division publishes *Top Fuel Eliminator* (TFE) for the Apple II and C-64/128 ($29.95). Both games allow the player to compete in series of championship competitions beginning with the Winternationals in Pomona and both claim to require the player to make strategic decisions based on track conditions. However, TFC's version of track conditions involves wins, losses, and crashes. TFE's version involves surface and air temperature, humidity, elevation, and traction. Both games suggest the ability to adjust the dragster. With TFC, one must change the entire engine to improve performance, but with TFE one can *adjust* the ignition and supercharger pressure without changing the engine. Likewise, TFC offers a choice of fuel mixtures, but TFE offers a choice with an explanation. TFC offers a choice of tires, TFE allows the player to know what those different tires accomplish. Both games allow clutch adjustments, but TFE offers a wing adjustment to improve the amount of drag. Of the two games, one must note that TFE is more user-friendly. Whereas TFC simply notes the player's failures, TFE offers a full-scale evaluation of every qualifying run. Finally, TFC offers full-screen graphics, while TFE uses a split-screen with the course on top and the cockpit view on the bottom.

Love is a Losing Proposition (Tennis)

Grand Slam Tennis **Infinity Software**: Grand Slam Tennis allows players to simulate professional tennis matches in the French Open, Wimbledon, U. S. Open, and Australian Open. The game is available for the Amiga with 512K and the Macintosh and retails for $49.95. The company also advertises an enhanced version for the Amiga which offers two person and modem play and retails for $59.95. In addition, both versions of the program have several extras like the "Tournament" option which allows the player to compete in a tournament format and a "Protest" option when the player doesn't like a line call (No, you don't have to curse like a recent U. S. superstar.). The Amiga speech synthesizer is used to give the score and make the linesman's calls. The graphics, with the exception of very fluid animation, are average for the Amiga and the color palette is extremely understated for an Amiga product.

Nevertheless, the action is where it is at and Grand Slam Tennis is an action game which is sophisticated enough to know that position is truly important in tennis. If the player can utilize the mouse to get the player into position for a return, the program assumes that the

(Continued on page 16)



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The Boys Of Spring

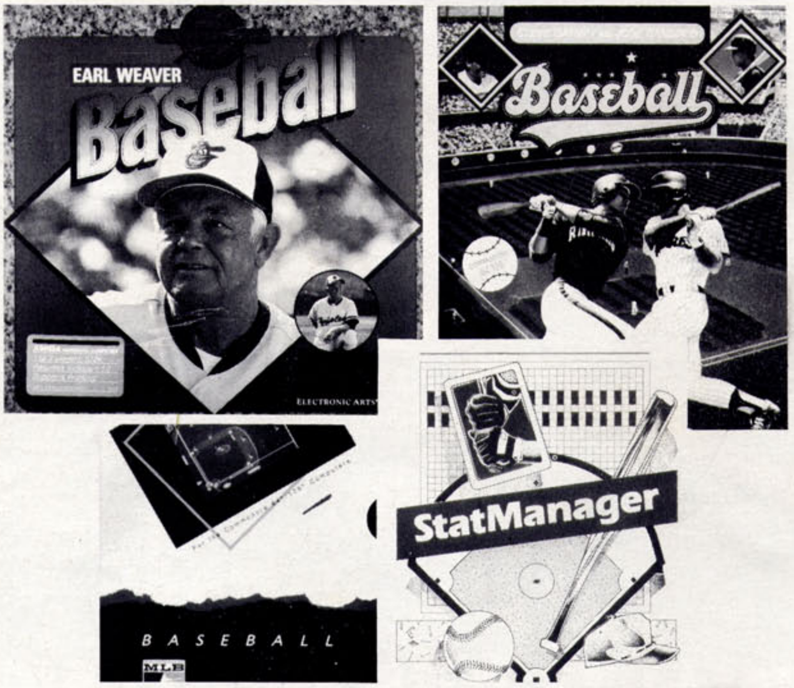
(Continued from page 14)

player's caricature on-screen has a smooth enough forehand or backhand to successfully return the volley. The other factor, admittedly obvious, deals with timing. Positioning determines whether your ground stroke will be a cross-court shot or a down the line shot. Additionally, one can use simply key strokes to set up a slice, lob, or smash, as well as use topspin, hit harder, hit softer, and adjust racquet speed. All the elements of the sport are well-simulated in this product.

Who's On First? (Baseball)

A more complete listing of baseball programs is available in *CGW #36* (April, 1987), but it is necessary to update one's references from time to time.

Earl Weaver Baseball (**Electronic Arts**): *CGW*'s **Game of the Year** in 1987, Earl Weaver Baseball is now available in both the Amiga and IBM formats. It is still the ultimate sports simulation in terms of versatility, chrome, statistics, and action. A *caveat* should be placed here, however. The IBM version had some serious stat-handling problems when it was first released. It was easy for players to end up with a pitching staff full of 99.99 earned run averages. The folks at EA believe they have found the problem, so send in $10.00 and the original disk in order to get the corrected version. Of course, some IBM owners have complained that the program can, from time to time fail to retire a side after three outs. This is not a programming bug. This is using one's security codewheel incorrectly. The protection scheme of EWB requires you to input data from a codewheel. If wrong data is input at the start of the game, the program allows you to play normally long enough to get the feel of the game and then goes haywire. That may induce some of the pirates to actually purchase a copy. The IBM may not have the sound or extensive color of the Amiga version, but it has some fine-tuning which the Amiga does not have. In the current Amiga version, the outfielders race to the ball and all outfielders release the ball almost instantly. In the IBM version, outfielders with better arms have a quicker release than those with average or lesser arms and is therefore more realistic.



These details, notwithstanding, EWB still has it all: 1) statistical compilation for league play; 2) general manager function for league trading; 3) ability to customize your own stadium and team colors; 4) instant replay and slow motion replay; and 5) ability to print out lineups according to Weaver's own model. As we go to press for this issue the Computer Gaming World Baseball League is preparing to use an upcoming EWB add-on, a Manager's Tools Disk which will have a number of features including stat editing, schedule generation, and a nice drafting program (ie. the tool kit can be used to run your league draft). To top all of this off, remember that wind, ball and player speed, and playing surface can all affect a given play's result. To offer all this and the ability to play in both strategy/action and strategy only mode is simply awesome.

Full Count Baseball (**Lance Haffner**): Received too late for inclusion in last year's survey, this text-heavy statistics-based baseball simulation offers extremely accurate replays. It is available for Apple, C-64, and IBM ($39.95). Features include availability of a 28 man roster, text description of each play (a la **EA**'s *Radio Baseball*), statistics compiler for league play, ability to save several team lineups on a disk (so starting lineups need not be input each game), and consideration of ball park effects (a la *EWB*). See *CGW #37* for a brief review and 1986 World Series Replay.

Grand Slam Baseball (**Cosmi**): Steve Garvey and Jose Canseco are the licensees for this release, so one would expect that this program's emphasis is on hitting rather than strategy. That is correct! The program offers a visiting and home team lineup with major league all star names, but it doesn't really matter what names you have out there if you are not personally handy with a joystick. The program is available for the C-64/128 and retails for $24.95. The graphics make excellent use of color, but the characters and animation is more reminiscent of older cartridge games than any recent releases.

Pure-Stat Baseball (**Software Simulations**): Basically the same game as reviewed in our previous survey, the big news for C-64 owners is that the current version of this graphically depicted statistics-based game does not have the statistics handling problems of the earlier version (e.g. giving credit for only three RBIs to the slugger who belts a grand slam home run). The game is now available for Apple II, C-64/128, and IBM for $39.95. Further, the designers have added the ability to change player's subjective ratings for range, throwing ability, base running ability, bunting and sacrifice. The graphics routines (with their annoying flip-flop of the stadium perspective) still tend to slow play down, but the game is still significant because of the number of offensive choices available (seven relate to the batter and seven to the baserunner) and defensive options provided (four for the pitcher and five for the fielders). Extras available separately include a Stadium and Classic Team

Disk (with all 26 current stadiums plus 10 classic teams), a 1986 Team Disk, and a 1987 Team Disk ($19.95 each).

StatManager (**Software Simulations**) is a sports utility program. In addition to basic batting statistics, the program enables coaches, managers, and statisticians to call up split-stats (averages vs. right or left-handed pitchers), types of outs (double plays, fly outs, line outs, ground outs), sacrifice attempts and successes, stolen base attempts and successes, clutch average, and tendency to hit to right or left field. Reports on pitchers may include split-stats, types of outs, total pitches thrown, strikes and balls thrown, pitchouts, and stolen bases against, in addition to standard statistics like won-loss or earned run average. It is available for Apple II, C-64/128, and IBM for $39.95.

Gym Dandy Selection

In short, there are plenty of interesting sports simulations available to keep computer game enthusiasts from climbing the walls during those April showers.

In The Eye of a Beholder!

A Look at FTL's "Dungeon Master"

by Hosea Battles, Jr.

Zed didn't feel much like a duke as he zeroed in the sights of his crossbow on the mummy. Perspiration dribbled down the side of his face, in spite of the dungeon's chill, as Zed released the bolt at the monster. His aim was true. The blow would have killed a human, but the bandaged corpse continued toward them.



A scene like that is the best one can do in trying to describe what playing *Dungeon Master* is like. The graphics in Dungeon Master are so splendid that players can not only see the detailing (right down to the cracks in the wall and floor), but practically feel the damp chill of the dungeons portrayed. There is even slime on the walls. Certain walls have hidden levers or buttons that must be pressed. The graphics, as you would suspect, are very clear and detailed in order to see them. Even the outlines of traps can be seen. Monsters are graphically detailed right down to the gleaming teeth! The Blue Ogres even change facial expression as they hack away at your characters. Beyond this, the game has digitized sound effects and makes use of all available colors on the ST. On top of this, one's adrenalin really flows because the game is in real time. There is no stopping to figure out a move. Everything is constantly moving and the clock always runs. It is non-stop action all the way. Game control is by extensive use of the mouse. It works extremely well in this game where looking for the right key press could spell certain doom in most situations.

TITLE:	Dungeon Master
SYSTEMS:	Atari ST
# PLAYERS:	Solitaire
PRICE:	$39.95
DESIGNER:	Doug Bell Mike Newton Dennis Walker
PUBLISHER:	FTL San Diego, CA

Reckless, Tough Champions

Players take on the role of Theron, an apprentice to The Grey Lord, a renowned wizard. In the Grey Lord's attempt to get the Power Gem, time and space was ruptured. This split him in two pieces, Librasulus (Restorer of Order, now in Limbo) and his evil counterpart Chaos (now sending evil in the countryside). Theron was sent into a ghostly existence. His present task is to prevent Chaos from obtaining the Power Gem by getting the Firestaff for Librasulus. To do this, he will control four champions who will enter Chaos' dungeon. These champions come from the Hall of Mirrors on the first level of the dungeon. There are twenty four champions who have been imprisoned in mirrors by Chaos. You have the power to resurrect them or use their life forces to create your own champions. Champions can be male or female, and can be of several races (Elves, Humans, others). Once restored, they will have all attributes and weapons they possessed when imprisoned.

To fully equip the champions, you will have to find objects in the dungeon. Some will be easy to get, other items you will have to fight for. Almost every standard fantasy game weapon is included (bows, arrows, axes, swords, magic weapons, and throwing stars). Armor includes mail, leather, shields, and helmets. Further, magic potions, magic scrolls and clothes can be found in the dungeon itself.

Manual Austerity

One important matter for any complex computer game is documentation. Though this manual is well written, explains in detail the mechanics of playing the game, and even includes a short story that sets the premise for the game play, it lacks an important feature. During game play, monsters are not identified by name. The manual is not helpful on this score, so one needs to drag out those *Dungeons and Dragons Monster Manuals* to help identify monsters and their characteristics (The reviewer purchased two of them for purposes of the game).

The Casting Crouch

No fantasy game is complete without magic and this game use magic in innovative ways. The two magic character classes are typical, Wizard and Priest, but the mechanism is different. In most games, the character finds a magic scroll, reads it, and the magic is cast. In this game, scrolls give you the symbols of a spell. To cast a spell requires two or more of these symbols, Power, Elemental, Form or Class Alignment. In the beginning, your characters may have no spells, so you must find scrolls. When you find a scroll, write down the name of the spell, the casting symbols, and what the spell does, on a separate sheet of paper. This allows you to leave the scroll where you found it, giving your character more room to carry more important items. Potions are also made the same way and require an empty flask in which to cast them. A good trick in casting a spell is to pick all symbols on the control line of a character and leave them there. When you need to cast it in the heat of battle, all you have to do is click on the control line.

Characters can be of four classes, Fighter, Ninja, Wizard (in this game it includes females), and Priest.

A character can obtain levels in all four of these classes. Character attributes are shown by three status lines representing Hit Points (Health), Stamina, and Manta (Magic Ability). When a character's hit points reach zero he dies and a pile of bones appears on the floor. Fortunately, there are resurrection altars scattered throughout the dungeon levels.

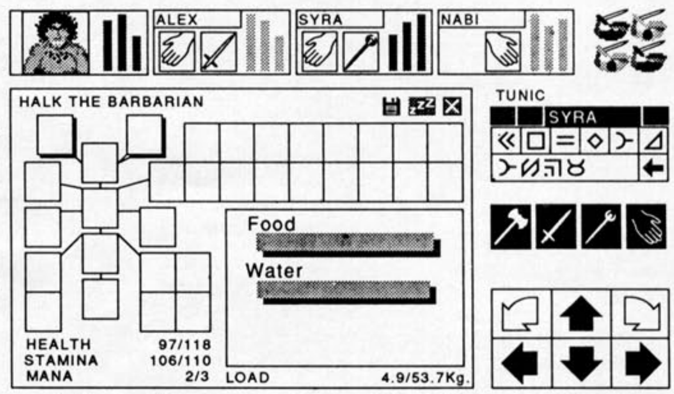
Food and water play important parts in the game. Although food and water is consumed slowly, in my opinion, they are not consumed slowly enough. This is where I have a complaint about the game. There is not enough food or water scattered in the dungeons. You can find food or water on a level, but rarely do you find both. Also, food and water are scattered on every other level. Some creatures can be killed and used as food, but there are not enough of them on some levels. Because of the extensive length of some levels, it is frustrating to get to the next level running low on food and water and find none, then have to retrace your steps back up a level to find food or water.

Mummy Fear List

There are Mummies, Giant Wasps, Ghosts, Screamer Slices (food), Purple Worms (food), armed Skeletons, Rock Piles (creature resembling pile of rocks), Flying Snakes, Beholders, Ogres, a Poison Tree (tree that shoots poison), and more, in the dungeon. Each require different tactics to defeat. The most dangerous for a novice player are the Rock Pile, Purple Worms, Flying Snakes, and Poison Tree because they are poisonous. Here are some hints to defeating them: A Rock Pile is slow moving, so hit and run tactics work. Put the two strongest fighters up front with heavy cut (sword or axe) or bash (club, mace) weapons. Advance, hit the creature, then back up, wait a few seconds, and repeat. This creature can take a lot of punishment, so be patient and keep doing this until the creature is defeated and you are rewarded with a pile of rocks. Purple Worms are fast, but the Box technique works. Lure creatures to an area with plenty of room all around. Wait until the worms are directly in front of the characters and use cut or bash weapons. Don't waste missile weapons on them. Side step one step to the right, move forward two steps, turn left, move forward one step, and turn left. You should be behind the worms and able to get at least three or four good hits on them. This requires fast reflexes on your part in using the mouse. Repeat these steps as the worms turn toward you and you will be rewarded with worm for food. It works to start the process with a side step to the left, too. Flying Snakes and the Poison Tree are both fast and deadly, but can be dispatched using the same technique. In this case, however, throw missile weapons until they are within one space of your characters. Have the magic user's command line ready with a Poison or Poison Cloud spell. Have plenty of Cure Poison Potion handy and watch out for the Tree firing poison bolts. Cast the spells, have two strongest fighters up front to hack and chop with cut weapons, and continue to use missile weapons. You will be rewarded fairly quickly with their demise.

Of Traps, Maps, and Claps

No fantasy game is complete without puzzles and traps. This game has plenty of both, including teleportation areas, Blue Waterfalls. This is where the game makes use of an important feature you don't often see used in fantasy games, SOUND! There is nothing more unnerving during game play, than the sound of a trap you just set off! Sound also gives clues to the location of secret doors, many of which would not be found except for the clanking sound of the door chains.



A Typical Inventory Screen From Dungeon Master

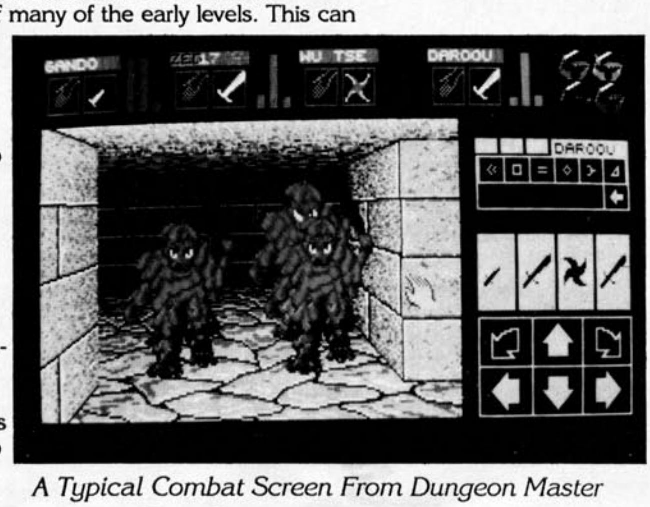
Unfortunately, there are no mapping spells, maps, or any other items that will display a map of the dungeon level. Because of the length, complexity, and non-stop action, it is extremely difficult to map the dungeon levels. I would liked to have seen the inclusion of maps or map spells in the game. Those who subscribe to GEnie Information Network can download maps of many of the early levels. This can help eliminate some of the tedium.



A Typical Scene Showing Treasure & An Open Door

FTL is working on a new scenario for the game which would be purchased separately (using the current game as a master disk).

This game is fantastic! It is a welcome addition to any fantasy players library. Those who want a good fantasy/role playing game with excellent graphics will love this one.



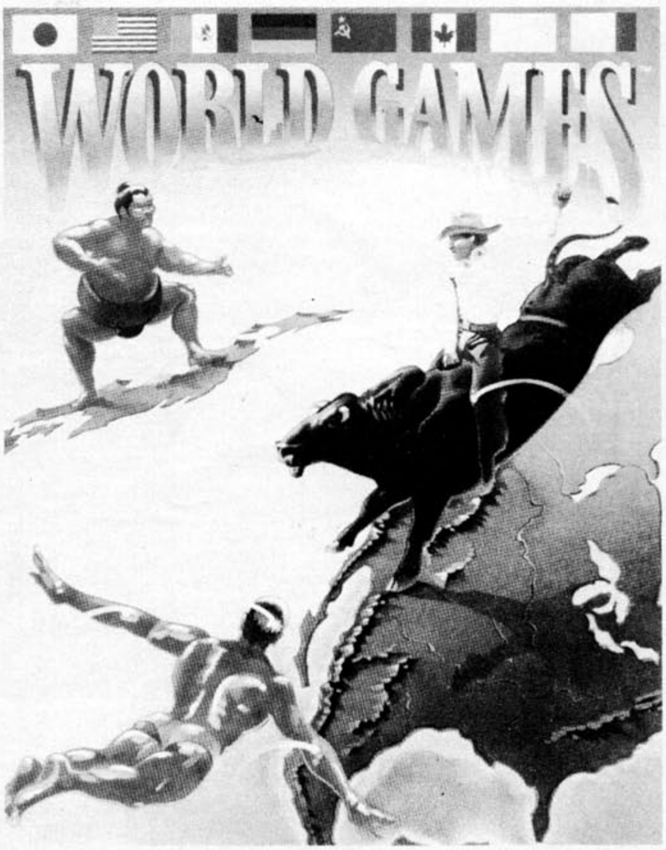
A Typical Combat Screen From Dungeon Master

SPANNING THE GLOBE . . .

Epyx' "World Games" Explored

by James Trunzo

It is hard to imagine a computer owner who is not familiar with **Epyx'** line of sports games. From the moment *Summer Games* and *Winter Games*, for instance, made their appearance on the software marketplace, they drew accolades for both their challenge and graphics. Newer products from Epyx have built upon these prototypes, retaining the theme of multiple sporting events built around Olympian themes. *World Games*, based upon eight international—and somewhat esoteric—contests, has made a very successful transfer to the Apple IIGS (as well as the Amiga and Atari ST).



World Games features such unusual and delightful events as log rolling in Canada, barrel jumping in Germany, and caber tossing in Scotland; such exotic contests as cliff diving in Mexico and sumo wrestling in Japan; and such traditional events as weight lifting in Russia and slalom skiing in France. Bull riding in the good old United States completes the sporting eight-pack.

TITLE:	World Games
SYSTEMS:	Amiga, Apple IIGS Atari ST, IBM, Apple II, C-64/128
# PLAYERS:	1-8
PRICE:	$34.95
DESIGNERS:	Designer Software Co.
PUBLISHER:	Epyx Redwood City, CA

World Games and the 16-bit machines were made for each other. Epyx takes advantage of the advanced graphics and sound capabilities of these machines by exploiting the possibilities of the program's theme. Before each event, a colorful and informative history of the event (presented in the form of a travelogue) provides background, while a detailed spinning globe rotates above. Watch the globe carefully and you will discover a blinking white dot, indicating the country of origin for the particular event selected.

Once the event begins, appropriate background music helps create atmosphere, with each song ethnically oriented to the country hosting the event. Basso oom-pah-pahs reverberate from the computer when in Germany and digitized flamenco guitars strum forth tunes to accompany the sound of waves breaking against the rocks when cliff diving in Acapulco.

Graphic depiction of the events themselves vary from very good to outstanding. Many of the events are three-quarter screen, while the remainder are either horizontally or vertically split-screened. It is worth noting the backgrounds of most events because they are real visual treats.

As usual, Epyx throws in numerous humorous graphic touches. The weight lifter's face turns redder and redder if you force him to hold too much weight too long; the bull turns his face toward the screen and snickers if he throws you; and 400 pound sumo wrestlers grunt and groan as they smash into each other, to name just a few.

Moving from graphics to mechanics of game play, manipulating the contestants in each event can be done via the keyboard or the joystick. Some events lend themselves to the keyboard, while others definitely are joystick oriented. A case in point, this reviewer had little success using a joystick in trying to get the caber tosser (a muscular Scottish gent, carrying a 12 foot, 120 pound log which he must fling!) to walk. However, switching to the keyboard, I managed to get my computerized persona to waddle across the screen with ease! The events simulated in World Games contain enough variation that none of them seem repetitive during the course of play.

Additionally, because World Games, like previous Epyx products of this sort, keeps track of the "World Records" you establish with your best efforts, the product has a built-in form of competition. Even if you are playing the game alone, you can strive to top the best previous effort and set a new standard.

Overall, World Games is a fine product and one that does justice to the 16-bit machines. Game players who enjoy products whose ingredients are two parts action to one part strategy will find World Games an enjoyable bit of diversion and one that will retain interest over a long period of time. Even gamers who prefer more cerebral entertainment can derive pleasure from the graphics and sound that make up World Games. The bottom line reads *fun* and that is what a game *should* be all about.

WORLD GAMES



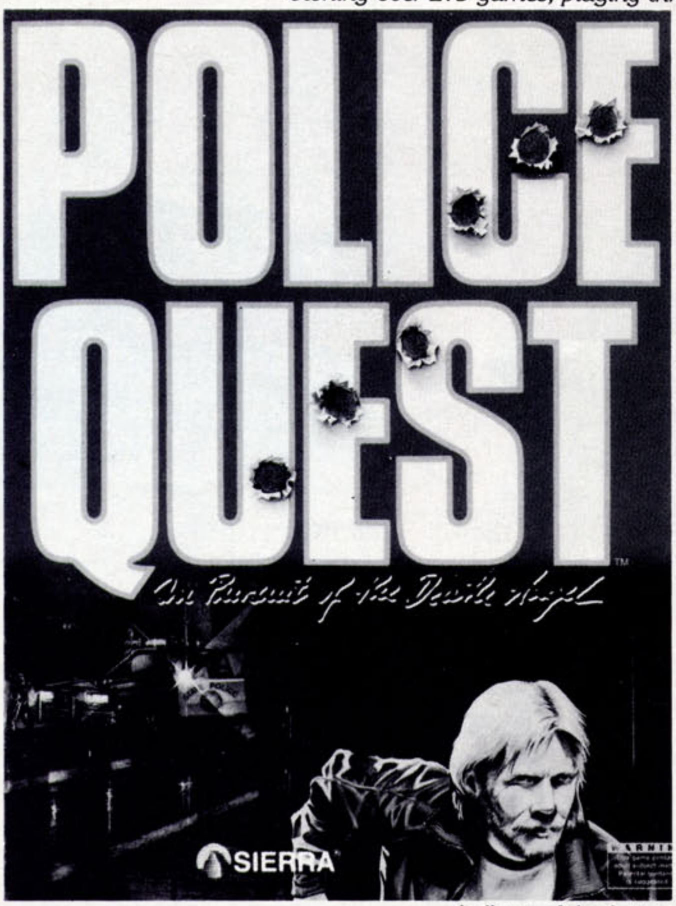
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Dusting the Death Angel

Sierra's New Police Adventure

by Michael S. Chaut

The author of this review will not admit to being a "game-aholic," but does confess to owning over 275 games, playing through **Sierra***'s entire "Quest" series, and ordering a color monitor for his PC, primarily because of the "Quest" adventures.*



The opening sequence of *Police Quest* displays the City of Lytton's Police Shield something a la *Dragnet*. The original music, designed by Margaret Lowe, which accompanies that screen would make anyone want to join the ranks of Sgt. Joe Friday. The game starts with "our hero," Sonny Bonds, standing in the main hallway of the Lytton Police Station. At this point, players should do a little exploration of the station in order to get their feet wet. As with all Sierra games, it is important to take, look, feel, touch, and smell everything that can be seen. It is not wise to explore too long, though, because one can miss the morning briefing (it's in the room in the upper right-hand corner of the screen). Then, before leaving the station, one should make sure he checks his messages, reads the newspaper, gets his radio and keys, and visits the locker room to pick up his gear.

TITLE:	Police Quest
SYSTEMS:	IBM Soon for:Atari ST, Mac, Amiga, Apple IIGS
PRICE:	$49.95
DESIGNER:	Jim Walls
PUBLISHER:	Sierra Coarsegold, CA

It soon becomes apparent that the ultimate mission in the game is to stop the flood of illegal drugs into this quiet middle-American community. Police Quest deals, however, not only with the "Dirty Harry" aspects of being a cop, but also with the daily mundane routines such as dealing with traffic violations and red tape at City Hall. Of course there are also life-threatening situations where split second timing and decisions will make the difference between life or death. In fact, the biggest difference between this game and real life, is that if one makes a mistake and is killed, it is possible to go back to the last saved game and try again.

Some of the graphic sequences in this game are the most terrific this reviewer has ever seen. Some may even want to save the game just before some of the sequences and play them over again in slow motion. For those that don't like all the usual typing that comes with a Sierra game (i.e. look rock, take rock, smell rock) Sierra has included in this game a handy "action key" (for the MS-Dos version it is the "F4" key.) It saves a lot of typing time by allowing one to use the "F4" key to get into and drive the patrol car. There is, of course, also the use of the "F3" key to echo or repeat the last command. Other action keys facilitate using weapons and the radio, hitting the showers, and selecting from the three driving speeds. These are:

Code 1 - Cruising (obeying the Traffic Code),
Code 2 - Faster (still obeying the Traffic Code), and
Code 3 - Emergency (red lights and siren, with no Traffic Code).

Hints: Players should be sure to read the *Lytton Police Department Policeman's Indoctrination Guide*. It is a major source for clues during the game. Players *must* know the correct police operating procedures for handcuffing, routine traffic stops, felony traffic stops, arrests, intoxicated driver stops, radio transmissions, and vehicle safety inspections. It is also necessary to know driving codes, radio codes, vehicle codes and some of the penal code. Further, the map that comes with the game is very helpful in finding certain places and remembering where they are located.

It is also important to be very careful when driving the patrol car. It may be wise to run the program at the slow speed until one gets used to the "feel of the wheel." It takes some time to get used to and every time one hits a wall, a sidewalk, or another car, it means death. This reviewer recommends that players save the game with every new screen until they get the hang of it. Of course, one learns a lot quicker when driving in "Code 3" mode. (The siren and red lights also are fun to play with!) Players on patrol duty should make sure they observe everything (i.e. look for people who run red lights and drunk drivers). When arresting suspects, players must make sure they follow proper arrest procedures (i.e. search your suspects and their vehicles). Players should question all suspects. If they seem reluctant, they should be questioned again.

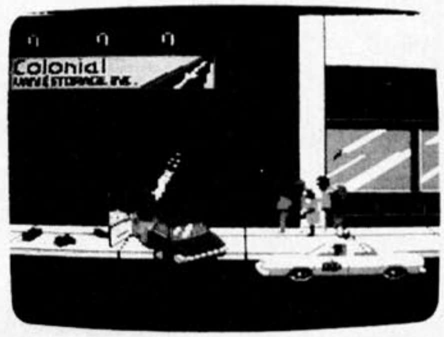
Players should not overlook using the evidence in the evidence room, the computer, and the telephone to help solve the case. It is even possible

to dial "411" for directory assistance. Pay close attention to the instructions given by fellow officers and superiors. It may even help to write down their instructions. Sometimes, their words are clues to puzzles. In order to win this game with all possible points, you will have to do some old fashioned police work. As with all Sierra games, however, one can win without getting the maximum number of points.

It is important to mention that this "Quest" game like, *Leisure Suit Larry*, comes with a *Warning* on the label. The game does not contain anything that is horrible or even that has more violence than you would see on the evening news, but I do agree that this game is not for real youngsters and "Parental Guidance" should be used. I should also point out that Police Quest is the first Sierra IBM release that has been published without copy protection. Inside sources say that this feature will serve as a test for future Sierra releases.

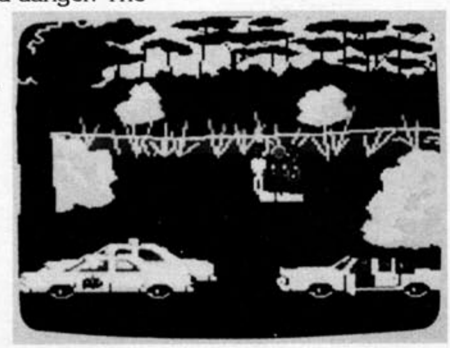
The game comes standard with three 5 1/4 inch disks as well as one 3 1/2 inch disk for the PS/2. It also has the Official Chamber of Commerce City of Lytton Map, the Lytton Police Department Policeman's Indoctrination Guide, Sierra's regular MS-Dos Reference Card, a special Police Quest Reference Card, and a How To Play Five Card Draw Poker Reference Card.

Police Quest is a linear game. In order to win, one does have to accomplish one task after another. However, those who miss something will be steered "back on track" by the game. This "Quest" game is straight forward. To this reviewer, it seemed easier to play than some of Sierra's earlier games, but maybe that is because people who like to read everything in the manual have an advantage in this game.



"Make Quick Responses To Emergency Calls"

Written by Jim Walls, a veteran of 15 years with the California Highway Patrol, Police Quest seems to have an extra added element of realism and danger. The overall design obviously stemmed from Walls' experiences "on the job." In any case, if you are a person who has enjoyed any of the Sierra "Quest" games in the past or if you are a "gamer" who enjoys great graphics, good puzzles, a good sense of humor, and an overall great gameplan, this game comes highly recommended.



Be Prepared For The Unexpected

Remember, BE CAREFUL OUT THERE!!!

Note:POLICE QUEST II is due out in September.

A ROUND ROBIN LETTER ON "FOG OF WAR" AND "LIMITED INTELLIGENCE" IN COMPUTER WARGAMES

"FOG OF WAR": A Clearer View

Since there is a great deal of passion with regard to computer wargame design and, particularly, with design features that simulate "fog of war" and "limited intelligence," CGW thought it would be interesting to start a round robin discussion about these issues. This article contains the first responses by designers to an introductory letter which suggested that extreme limited intelligence contributes to a computer phobia. In that letter, we suggested that carefully planned attacks with insurmountable odds which are unsuccessful cause many to wonder if the program failed to take something into account. We noted problems with subordinate commanders operated by the computer which failed to obey orders. We also suggested that it was unfortunate when players could not tell why a given attack failed. Our solutions were to offer a print-out or window with the exact combat equation displayed; present an approximate strength ratio (offense: defense); or offer a chance to "reroll" an attack.

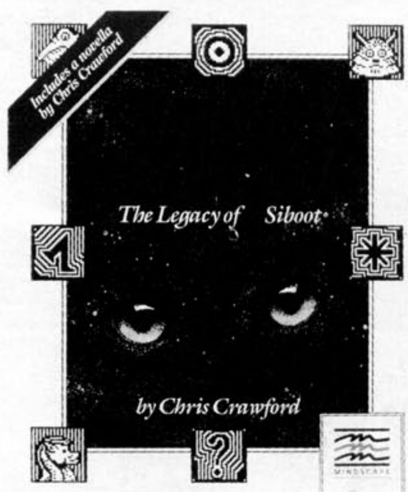
Chris Crawford

Chris Crawford is the designer of "Eastern Front," "Balance of Power," and "Trust and Betrayal: The Legacy of Siboot."

I claim an unflattering priority in the subject of this discussion: one of the first instances of the problem discussed here arose over my game *Tanktics*. In a review of that game appearing in this magazine, the reviewer roasted the game for, among other faults, a fog of war system that greatly detracted from his enjoyment of the game. That was a game first published in 1979!

Most people don't buy wargames to study military history, they buy them to have fun, and when the games get too realistic, they lose their appeal

I now perceive the problem to be a matter of confusion on the part of the consumer over the desirability of realism. Most players like to believe that their games are realistic. Endless amounts of hot air are exhausted debating the relative strengths and weaknesses of different game systems. Some players seem to have a huge ego-investment in



Chris Crawford's Trust & Betrayal

the memorization of vast amounts of utter trivia (Can *you* recall the muzzle velocity of a KwK 42 L/70 gun?) Game designers often take such talk too seriously. They come to believe that game players want realistic simulations of warfare. No simulation of combat can claim to be realistic if it doesn't include some provision for the chaos and confusion of the real battlefield.

The problem, of course, is that chaos and confusion are *not* fun. Ask anybody who's been there. Every military commander, from the highest level to the lowest, struggles against a maze of confusing, limited, and often contradictory information. Their own lives, and/or the lives of many others, depend on their ability to make sense out of a fundamentally confusing situation. Face it, folks, war is *not* fun.

Who wants to pay good money to experience the same confusion and chaos? Who wants to invest hours and hours of his time setting up and carrying out a plan, only to find out, as so many military commanders have, that sometimes things just don't turn out the way you have a right to expect them to turn out? Most people don't buy wargames to study military history, they buy them to have fun, and when the games get too realistic, they lose their appeal.

Players want control, the sense that they are in charge of everything that's happening. The popular wargames of today have more in common with chess than war.

So give wargamers what they want and dump fog of war.

Steve Newberg

Stephen Newberg is president and guiding light of Simulations Canada. He is responsible for "Development" on titles like "Fifth Eskadra," "Rommel at Gazala," and "Long Lance.".

. . . The terms "fog of war" and "limited intelligence" are often used interchangeably, but really, limited intelligence is a subset of fog of war. Limited intelligence is itself a general term, encompassing two forms of limitation of information passed to the player (or unit commanding officer, or overall commander of the depicted group).

The first limitation is that of observation. This is the more commonly depicted form of limited intelligence in that its primary effect is to reduce the details available to the player (or CO) on the status of the opposition. These information reductions can be done in two principle areas: opposing strength and opposing location.

The second limitation is that of organization. For simplicity, this can be called "viewpoint." In any event, the commander is a particular person in a particular position and in any simulation worthy of the term the player must represent that person (in general) and that position (in particular).

While the effects of observational intelligence limitation are fairly obvious (not knowing where the second enemy division is, since it is no longer in the combat line and air recon is shut in by bad weather, or not knowing the strength of the first enemy division except that it is beating back your current attack with apparent ease), those of view-

point are less so, since they deal with information that will not be available for reasons of structure (that is, the staff people in your third battalion did not mention in their daily report that 1/5 of their men have stomach flu . . .).

von Clausewitz used the term "friction" to describe that which does not go as planned, which is most everything in the average battle

This, then, brings us back to "fog of war," which itself covers all of the above, as well as the heart of affairs on the battlefield as described by von Clausewitz in his enduring classic, *On War*, namely "friction."



Steve Newberg's Rommel At Gazala

Friction is the term used to cover everything that does not go as planned, which is most everything in the average battle. The actions of such friction on the player are the center of the unhappiness of the introduction to this round robin discussion on Fog of War. Well, I have an answer. Tough!

Let's get down to hard facts here and stop the nonsense. What do you want in your computer game? Do you want a simulation? Since all of these games deal with some sort of historic topic and most call themselves simulations, I will assume you actually want history and reality as major aspects, or we have degenerated to hypocrisy. Do you want to learn something about command? Since I have yet to see a computer game which makes the player a rifleman just getting shot at while the computer is his commanding officer, I will assume that the buying public is not out to try out being a grunt. Well, if you want a commanding position in a realistic depiction of an historical event, then perhaps a bit of frustration is not out of place.

Do you really think that battles occur as the commanders of the involved forces wish them to? If so, you have never read history. No battle works as planned. None ever has and none ever will. I think it was one of the Molkes that talked about no battle plan surviving contact with the enemy. Well, when your carefully planned attack goes wrong, welcome to the real world. Do you really want to know everything about your forces and the enemy's? If so, why are you playing a computer game? Board games are great at letting you know pretty much everything and they cost a lot less.

. . . . So take your choice. But let's stop the complaining if the ones that try to take you a step into realistic shoes also occasionally leave you confused or frustrated . . . .

Roger Damon

Roger Damon is the designer of "Operation Whirlwind," "Field of Fire," "Wargame Construction Set," and most recently, "Gone Fish'n."

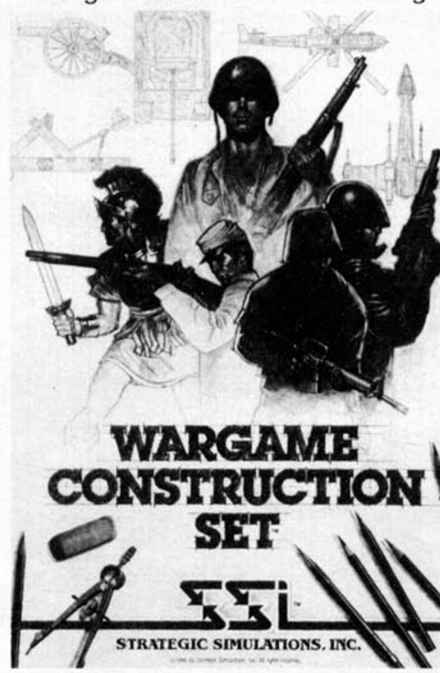
I have to wonder how much this "fogginess" attributed to computer wargames actually keeps some gamers from entering the realm. Anybody who has a fear of playing a computer game because the computer might screw up his brilliant strategy is in the wrong ballpark. . . . .

I've been a board wargamer for more than 20 years, and if there are any nightmares out there, they're lying in wait amongst the overwhelming number of incomplete, unfriendly, confusing, and badly written rules booklets that come with these games. . . . .

In a design, I usually add features to a basic system until memory is full or the game is perfect. I've never had a perfect game, so I fill memory

Maybe the thread runs a little deeper. Maybe the hesitation of the board wargamer centers on control. On a board game, the player has complete control. Especially if it's a solitaire run. Any unit can be put anywhere and anything can be done to it with a mild flick of the hand. And, it's all there to see. One good glance at a board game situation and the gamer has a grasp of the situation. I don't know of any computer wargames that offer this much information so cleanly. This can be a rub and I don't blame anyone from shying away from it. A board gamer can change units, redo moves, remove units, and even change the rules on a mere whim. With a computer game, you're kind of stuck.

I think that, more to the point, what we have here is the player expressing what a wargame should do versus the desig-



Roger Damon's Wargame Construction Set

ner imagining what he can do. I think what's being asked is "Let's make these games more friendly, more adaptable, more easily manipulated by the player." I say, I'm not sure that's in the same territory as the board wargames were. In fact, to take a computer game to board game flexibility can become perverse. Let me cite a real case I encountered.

In my games, a unit is moved a square at a time by the joystick. If a player makes a mistake, or sneezes during movement, a unit may wind up in an unintended spot. Fine, hit the select key and he pops back to where he started. But what if that unit already assaulted and won, eliminating an enemy unit? What if the sneeze caused the unit to run out of movement by entering dense terrain? As each "what if"

is encountered, it is dealt with by using memory in the computer for more program. Now, what if the player starts moving another unit and decides the previous unit is not where he wanted it? Am I to have the program keep track of each move, shoving more and more information into memory? . . . The more we try to mimic the flexibility of a board game, the less we have to make the game a game. Why? . . . . [The flexibility intrinsic to a board game] is alien to the computer game. . . . Computers are dynamic systems. As one progresses through a game, things are destroyed as others are created. It is a finite realm. What did I do in the above case? Rather than cover each case accordingly and eat up tons of memory, I simply allowed the player to put that unit back in its original spot, no matter what he did with it. Sure, he could cheat doing this, but so what? The intention was to allow the player to fix some of the mistakes he may make.

So, I suggest that this lack of control and lack of readily available information compared to what printed cardboard and paper gives us may be the real reason many wargamers don't take the plunge into computer wargames. They look similar, but are apples and oranges. . . . As I've said earlier, the board game offers an incredible range of flexibility, while the computer game offers little.

This is not to say that computer games are lacking. They are useful in their own realm. Maps may not be as graphically pleasing as board games, but they are much more flexible, with the ability to change their look by the mere changing of a number in memory. Computer games come already set up; offer the solitaire gamer a decent opponent; can express "real time" combat; and on and on. . . .

Perhaps, the heart of the matter here is user friendliness. Fog of war is an intentional inclusion in computer wargames. . . Fog of war is a vital and exciting part of computer wargaming. It is moving a Tiger platoon down a road like nobody's business when . . . crack! . . . shots are fired and the Tiger platoon is missing a tank and scrambling for cover. Leaving a player to wonder what happened to an eliminated Tiger tank when all it underwent was machine gun fire, that's a user friendliness problem (and a bug to boot).

User friendliness is an area of concern for me. I've gone to some lengths to make my programs user-friendly. Just about anyone can pick them up with a minimum of instruction and fare pretty well. But there are mysteries, too. I've hidden my combat algorithms in code. Having been a board wargamer, I am aware of the player who has an acute fascination for the details of a game, but I decided not to cater to that type. I never held that fascination. Having played wargames, I know what a Tiger tank is and how it shapes up against, say, a T34. I don't know this from examining combat results tables. I know this from experiencing Tigers versus T34s in a gaming environment.

. . . In a design, I usually add features to a basic system until memory is full or the game is perfect. I've never had a perfect game, so I fill memory.

I can see stopping at a point and, instead of including a halftrack unit with transport capabilities, I start writing code that details the game play to the user as things happen. Is this what you want? If it is, it would be somewhat of a relief. It's easier to write that kind of code than to write code that covers transporting and transported units, and all the gobble-degook that entails (e.g. can transported units shoot? can they be separate targets? what if the halftrack gets blown up? etc.).

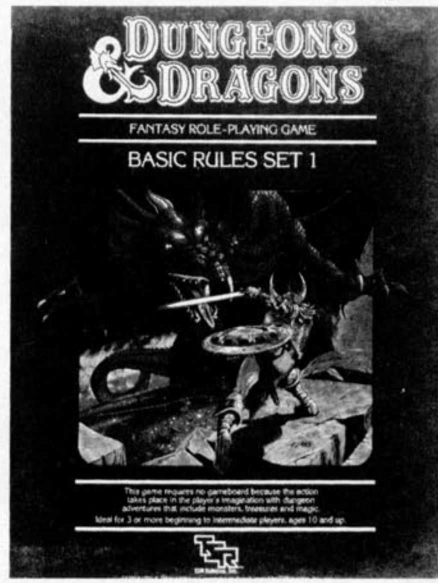
In closing, . . . I think computers are something else entirely *[than boardgames]* and computer wargame designers should be exploring the differences as strengths. . . .

Dave Arneson

Dave Arneson is best known as the co-creator of "Dungeons and Dragons". He also designed a computer game entitled "Battle of Britain." It should be remembered that Arneson was a historical wargamer prior to the advent of role playing games.

Creating an effective Fog of War is one of the biggest "plus" factors in computer simulations today. Not knowing what is going on is certainly the most common factor found in wars throughout history. On pre-electronic age battlefields, the general rarely could determine what was happening. For example, during the Waterloo campaign, Napoleon did not know the exact situation several times. He never did know what happened at Quatre Bras (8 miles from Ligny) or Wavre (9 miles from Waterloo). At Waterloo, he did not know what was happening in front of Hougoumont (4,400 yards away) on the French left. Even reports from Placernoit (2,500 yards away) on the French right were sketchy. Napoleon's command control was, thus, about a mile. Over five miles, his control was as effective as if he had been on the moon!

In early battles, smoke quickly destroyed the ability of generals to see what was happening. A general's last real command was to order his troops



Dave Arneson's Dungeons & Dragons

into battle. After that, control of the situation drops like a rock through the chain of command. "Control" came down to the battalion and company commanders. At best, the troops might ask for reinforcements. At worst, the next thing the General sees is his men running out of the smoke pursued by the enemy!

In the era of sailing ship battles, the Admiral's plan soon dissolved and the individual ship's captains took over the conduct of their individual battles. All shrouded in great rolling banks of powder smoke.

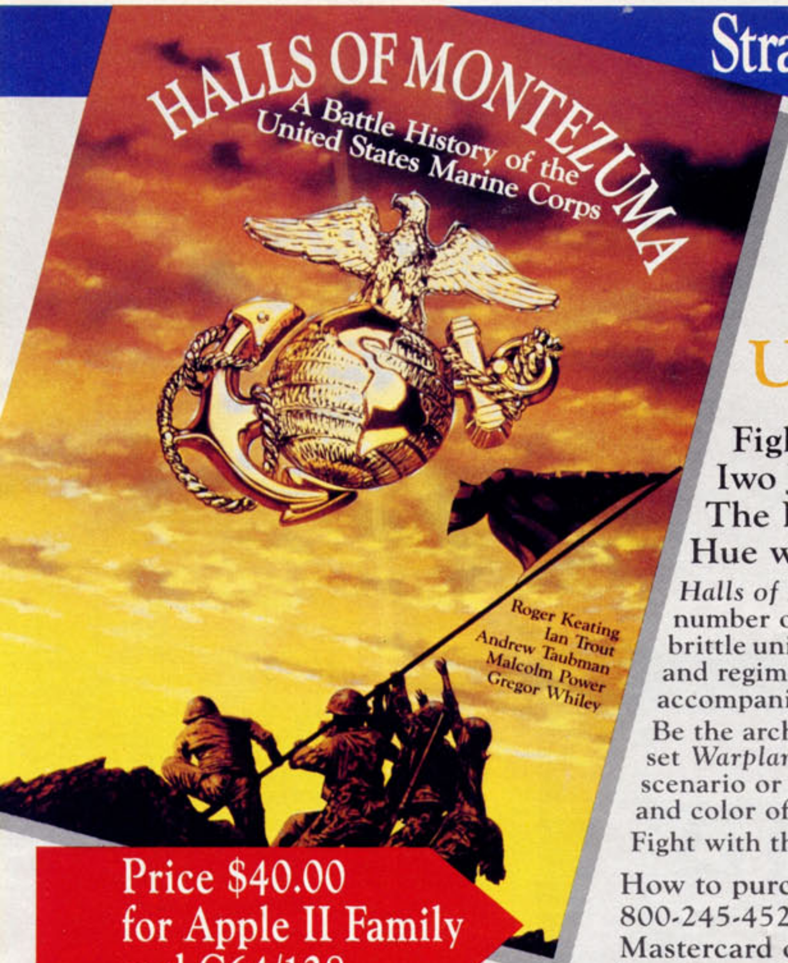
A program should have an "After Action Report." This would allow players to see what happened that he couldn't see during the game

Air operations consist of overall planning with execution rapidly falling to individual aircraft playing "follow the leader," *if* they can see him! Your forces report that all the enemy is eliminated and the target is flattened. Only a thorough debriefing uncovers the approximate "truth" of what really happened.

On today's electronic battlefield, there

(Continued on page 52)

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Sneak Preview

Ferrari Formula One



Ask the average European sports fan who Don Mattingly or John Elway is and you may get a puzzled look. "John Elway, isn't he that Irish flutist?". But ask him who Alain Prost or Nigel Mansell is, and you will probably get an immediate answer. "Alain and Nigel? They're simply the two best Grand Prix drivers in the world!"

In 1986 there were 16 Grand Prix events held in 15 countries (Italy had two races). Take the World Series, the Super Bowl, the college bowls, and Ringling Bros. Barnum and Bailey Circus; roll them up into one event and you have a sense of how important a Grand Prix race is for the host country. Attendance at a Grand Prix event can run 400,000 to 500,000! When a Grand Prix race "rolls into town" the country takes a holiday. Well, most of countries, anyway. Detroit hosts the U.S. Grand Prix, but when the world's best Formula One drivers come to Motor City in June, most U.S. sports writers are more engrossed by who baseball fans are voting for the the All-Star balloting.

Well, Electronic Arts may single-handedly spark a new interest in Grand Prix racing among U.S. sports fans. When I got my first look at *Ferrari Formula One* I was hooked. When I thought of auto racing, my association had always been to think of speedway racing such as you find at the Indianapolis 500 or stock car racing. You know what I mean, a uniform oval track, where fast cars go around, and around, and around, and around . . . (you get the idea). While that has its attractions for some, it did not interest me. However, because of this new program from EA, Grand Prix racing has grabbed me.

Ferrari Formula One (Amiga with planned ports to IBM and C-64) is Electronic Arts second release in their "Sports Legends" series. The first was *Earl Weaver Baseball* which was CGW's Game of the Year in 1987. *Ferrari Formula One* is another winner in terms of realism, excitement and

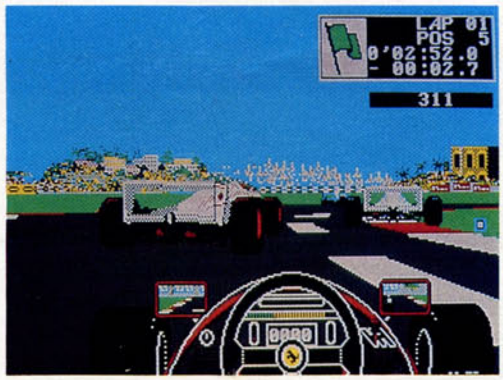
Grand Prix Racing Simulation

by Russell Sipe

playability. It is an outstanding example of how action and strategy can be combined to make an outstanding game. The actual race events are hand-eye coordination contests of the very best design. On the other side, the preparations for the race and the guidance of your "team" through the Grand Prix season are challenges to delight all fans of good strategic simulations.

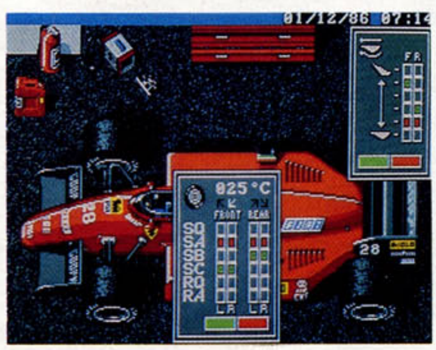
The sixteen courses of the 1986 Grand Prix circuit are reproduced in amazing detail and reality. The background scenery drifts by separately from, but in relationship to the foreground, giving a 3-D animated effect that must be seen to be believed. You will spend a good deal of time just learning the various courses. But don't expect this to be tedious. It was exciting when, after numerous runs, I felt I had the "Autodromo Internacional do Rio de Janeiro" course down pat. Time to go on to qualifying and ultimately the race!. But now a new challenge confronts you. The opposing drivers! The program simulates the racing styles of actual Grand Prix drivers. They are all there, 1986 World Champion Alain Prost (France), the 1987 World Champion Nelson Piquet (Brazil), Britain's Nigel Mansell, Brazil's Ayrton Senna (winner of the U.S. Grand Prix in 1986 and 1987), and a host of other top Grand Prix drivers. Well, they are there, sort of. The program lists drivers initials and car numbers instead of their names. This was probably done to avoid royalty entanglements that could arise with using the real names of drivers from so many different countries (in Grand Prix racing there is no mechanism for collective bargaining on royalty rights such as is found in U.S. professional sports).

Auto race games are nothing new. There have been dozens released in the last several years. But *Ferrari Formula One* tops them all for the realis-



Monaco At 180 M.P.H.

tic feel of racing. Rick Koenig, *Ferrari Formula One*'s designer, has entered



Hit The Pits!

new design territory with the peripheral vision scanning that he has incorporated into *Ferrari Formula One*. For example, when you turn your car to the left, your view pans left so that the path of the car is pointed right of center and the terrain coming up on the left is seen more clearly. This feature will become a new standard that future race games will have to emulate.

Beyond the incredible racing sequence itself, *Ferrari Formula One* is a detailed simulation of auto race mechanics and race planning. You will use the wind tunnel and dyno room to experiment with various systems on your car (fuel injection computer ROM system, turbochargers, wing settings, suspension, etc.). You will have to learn the various type of tires to use for different events. Gear ratios must be adjusted according to the type course you will be racing.

The 1986 Grand Prix season is simulated in *Ferrari Formula One.* The World Champion that year was Alain Prost of France (who?). The only U.S. Grand Prix driver in 1986 was Eddie Cheever (who?). These are not exactly marketable names in the U.S. So, unlike *Earl Weaver Baseball* and the upcoming *John Madden Football*, EA decided to go after an auto maker to be associated with this "Sports Legends" release instead of an individual sportsman. Ferrari was a natural choice of manufacturers. Rich Hilleman of EA describes Ferrari as the "N.Y. Yankees of Grand Prix racing", pointing out that no auto maker has won more World Championships. True, but there may be another reason for going with Ferrari, I mean, when you consider the alternative: "Williams-Honda Formula One"?

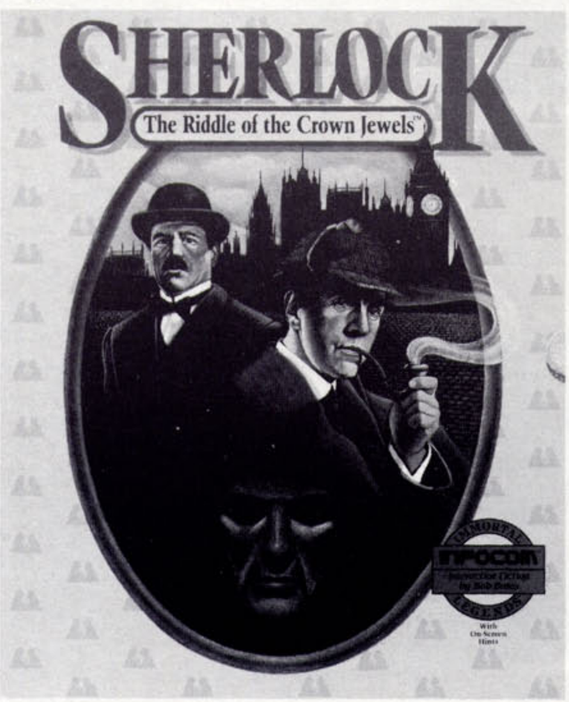
I predict a grand reception for *Ferrari Formula One*. Buckle up, and get ready to lose some sleep!

This month, Sherlock: The Riddle of the Crown Jewels *takes center stage as adventuredom's four star rated innkeeper weaves her regular tale of mystery and suspense.*

Spring is with us once again (poor Fred, he misses those long winter nights already); time to put away the snow shovels and get out the lawn mowers. While you're waiting for the grass to grow high enough to cut, have a seat and we'll talk about the good old days: hansom cabs, gaslight, fog-shrouded streets, and Sherlock Holmes.

Right off, let me say that if you're a dyed-in-the-wool Sherlock Holmes fan, you may not like this game very much. Watson solves the case, while Holmes spends most of the game trailing around after him, doing very little of anything. In this respect, *Sherlock: The Riddle of the Crown Jewels* is a misleading title. Holmes might almost not be in it at all, considering the small part that he plays.

Sherlockians may also be unhappy over the portrayal of Professor Moriarty (no relation to Brian) as a taunting, teasing opponent, leaving cutesy clues for Holmes to find throughout London. The real Moriarty was a serious criminal, who never went in for cute tricks; he went straight for the jugular in a no-nonsense manner.



SHERLOCK
The Riddle of the Crown Jewels™

On the other hand, those who do not take their Holmes quite so seriously may enjoy this game, which is almost pure puzzle-solving. It is not a mystery along the lines of, say, a *Witness* or *Suspect*. There is no evidence as such to collect for a prosecution and few people that you need to speak to.

"Crown Jewels" itself is not a particularly hard adventure, and no one should have much difficulty in solving it, especially as the game comes with built-in answers (as did "Border Zone" and "Nord and Bert"). A couple of puzzles may tempt you to look at the hints, but overall it's pretty straightforward going.

It all begins during Jubilee Week, celebrating the fiftieth year of Queen Victoria's reign. While most of Britain is caught up in the celebrations and good times, Dr. Watson is summoned to 221B by Mrs. Hudson, who has become increasingly alarmed over Holmes' growing inactivity and moodiness.

Watson finds his old friend in a very black mood indeed, and it will take more than mere conversation to rouse Holmes from his lethargy. An important client is waiting downstairs, so there is no time to lose. What is needed here is something unusual and out of the ordinary, to capture Holmes' attention.

Once Holmes has snapped out of it, the client is brought up by the landlady and relates shocking news: the Crown Jewels have been stolen! Unless they are found and returned by Monday morning, a catastrophe of unimaginable proportions will befall the Empire!

Naturally, Holmes and Watson aren't about to let that happen. There are no clues to the thieves, but left at the scene of the crime was a paper with some poetic verses written on it. These verses are pointers as to where to go next, and also contain a warning for Holmes not to take on the case.

This is the time to get out the partial map of London that comes with the game. Holmes and Watson can only visit those places which are on or near the dark brown band that runs along some of the streets; all the rest are inaccessible. That still leaves a fair number of places to visit, including Scotland Yard, Trafalgar Square, Parliament, the Tower of London, and Madame Tussaud's, among others (all the tourist traps! grin).

While it is possible to walk around the streets, most travelling should be done in a cab, which is generally faster. Read the sample transcript in the manual so you know how to call a cab, and which one to call (Watson, by the way, is never asked for payment by the cabbie; perhaps Holmes forks over the charge).

The first stop on the London tour is indicated by the first verse on the paper. This is Westminster Abbey, the burial site of British royalty for many centuries (I didn't like to say that right out, but there was really no way around this one, and like most of the verses, it's rather blatantly obvious).

You may want to make a map as you walk through the Abbey, as, rather surprisingly, many of the room descriptions do not give the exits. You will have to try going in different directions from the rooms to see if there are any other ways out. Fortunately, it isn't too large a place.

Since tombs are the main feature here, it's a logical assumption that the next three verses have something to do with them, although finding out what may be a puzzle. A careful survey of all the rooms will definitely help, at least to some extent. Still, Watson will be needing some outside assistance (not from Holmes, however), and a little research is in order here.

When this part has been properly unraveled, several more verses will come to light, and these are the heart of the game. All of them refer to various places around London where Watson will find something. Obtaining these somethings and figuring out their purpose is the major activity. Fortunately, there

is no specific sequence required. Watson can go after the objects in any order, although the one in the Tower of London will have to come last.

Most of the verses in this second set are so obvious (and in the case of London Bridge and the Tower, explicit), that determining the locations to visit will take hardly any effort at all; the only one that may give people some pause for thought is the "candle/chopper" verse, but that one can be figured out simply by looking in on places not previously visited.

While Watson will be doing a lot of cabbing around, it's a good idea if he also takes a stroll down the streets and byways of London. There are some interesting people to meet, and items to be obtained, which he'll never see unless he does some moving around on his own two feet.

There is plenty of time for this, however. Watson has forty-eight hours to recover the jewels, which is more than enough (especially since he won't have the chance to sleep). The only thing to be careful about is that many of the buildings have definite hours when they are open; so don't expect to be able to get into them in the middle of the night.

It's rather difficult to give clues to the game here, since (a) the game comes with clues and answers in it, and (b) almost any clue would give away the locations to search in (although as I said before, the verses are simple to solve).

The puzzles themselves are also fairly simple, provided that (in most cases) you have the proper item or items with you. Even if you do get stuck, it's likely that the first online hint will set you on the road to the solution (try to avoid the temptation to keep hitting N for the next one). Sometimes just looking at the list of hint categories may be enough to get you moving again.

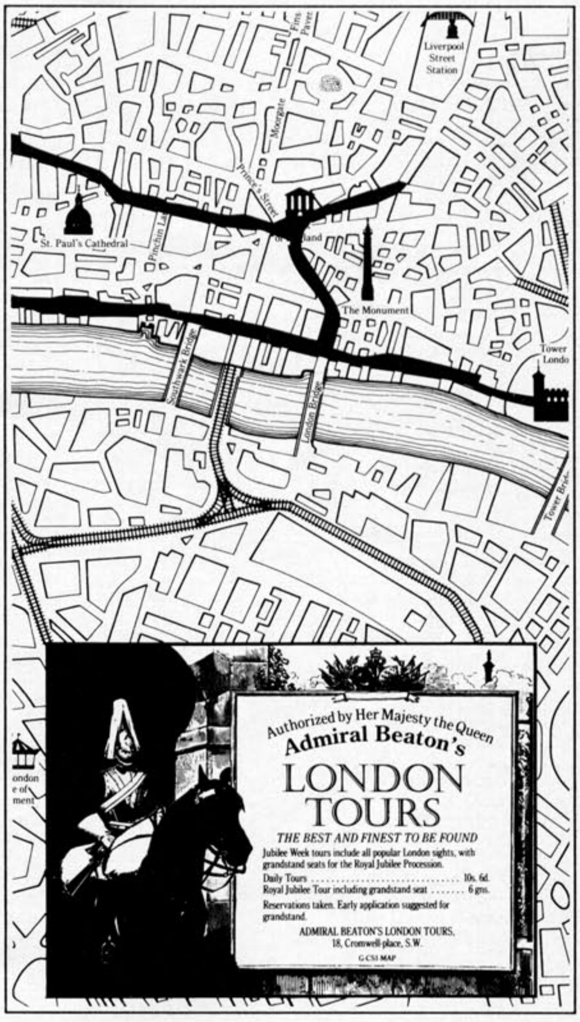
Somewhere along the line, Holmes will be kidnapped. This is built-in and cannot be avoided, so don't let it bother you (besides, he hasn't been much help in the game, anyway). This doesn't mean Watson will be alone, however, since he'll acquire a new companion in the person of Wiggins, head of the Baker Street Irregulars (and there's even a cameo appearance later by Mycroft, Sherlock's brother).

Wiggins will trail along much as Holmes did, but there are a couple of places where he will provide invaluable assistance (both before and after he becomes Watson's shadow), actually doing something for you. However, at the end game portion, Wiggins will stay behind, and Watson must go it alone into Moriarty's Lair.

So, at last, Watson comes face to face with the nefarious Napoleon of Crime. The Crown Jewels are spread out on a table in front of him, glittering in the gaslight. Holmes is nearby, securely tied to a chair, and Moriarty's accomplice is at hand, to make sure that Watson doesn't try anything.

Time is very short here. Watson has no more than a few moves to subdue the criminals and save the day for the British Empire. He will really need his thinking cap for this one, and timing is critical (it's a good idea to save the game soon after entering the Lair, just in case).

Unfortunately, there is no way to bring Moriarty & Co. to justice. They will escape to plot further underhanded doings. The main thing is to get the jewels to the palace on time, of which by now there is very little. A quick cab ride should just make it with scant minutes to spare and a very nasty situation will have been averted. The Queen, of course, will be properly thankful.



The major problem with this adventure is the loose plotting. If the purpose of the verses is to lead Holmes into a trap (as Holmes surmises very early on), there is no real point to his kidnapping later in the game, since Watson is following up on the clues very nicely.

On the other hand, if Moriarty fears that Holmes won't fall for it, the kidnapping makes sense, but in that case, why is Watson (who is on the scene) not taken as well? The kidnappers actually have him and then let him go. Of course, it is necessary (in game terms) for Watson to remain at liberty, but this part really ought to have been better handled. It is best to play this game for the puzzles, and not think too much about the story line.

Well, it's about that time again, as I see by the invisible clock on the wall. Remember if you need help with an adventure game, you can reach me in the following ways: On Delphi, stop in at the GameSIG (under the Groups and Clubs menu). On GEnie, visit the Games RoundTable (type Scorpia to reach the Games RT). On The Source, send SMail to ST1030. By US Mail (enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you live in the US): Scorpia, PO Box 338, Gracie Station, NY NY 10028.

Until next time, happy adventuring!

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SIDEWALK SURFIN' SAFARI

by Yung Min Choi

Breezing through the back alley at 20 m.p.h., you suddenly realize that skateboards do not have brakes and the chain link fence in front of you is unavoidable. You brace yourself for the impact, but feel absolutely nothing as you pass through the fence as easily as Casper the friendly ghost passes through walls. The fence shows no damage either. This is all intensely disorienting until your body falls into nearly two hundred tiny pieces.



The scenario depicted above is only one of the ways skaters "eat it" in *Skate or Die*, a fast-moving action game based on the skateboarding subculture. In fact, dying is the main thing the animated characters do in this game. Nevertheless, players will not experience too much pain when their alter egos slam into the ground because, when a character crashes, it is always in a humorous way.

TITLE:	Skate or Die
SYSTEMS:	C-64/128
# PLAYERS:	1-8
PRICE:	$29.95
DESIGNERS:	Michael Kosaka Stephen Landrum, and David Bunch
PUBLISHER:	Electronic Arts Redwood City, CA

The game begins in Rodney's Skate Shop. It is easy to recognize the punked-out proprietor ("Punked out? I never get no respect!"). At the skate shop, players choose to compete or practice. Even the best joystick jockeys will need to practice before competing. The action sequences seem deceptively simple, but they still demand practice.

Jam, Joust, Jump and Jive

The downhill jam is an event where players zip down a back alley in order to see how much destruction they can cause. Skaters smash soda cans and bottles, lay flower pots to waste, and even try tripping one's opponent. Solitaire players and groups with odd numbers may wind up skating against Lester, Rodney's homely son and resident computer opponent. He doesn't get any respect either, except in the pool joust.

Speaking of the pool joust, this is an event in which characters skate around in an empty pool with a boffing stick and try to knock the other character's for a loop. There are three opponents to choose from, but the meanest of these is Lester. Hint: Try to stay out of the corners of the pool in order to stay alive in this event.

A quieter event involves a downhill race. Characters skate over, under, and around a number of obstacles (Radical skaters consider these *opportunities*.). Gravel is the one to watch out for in this competition. The game mechanics are nice because you can either use the joystick normally or choose to control it in a pattern as though it was your foot and you were on the board itself.

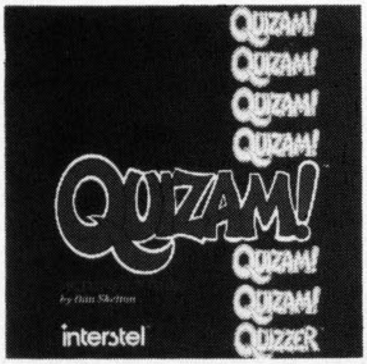
If you want to demonstrate sheer guts, you will not want to miss the high jump contest. In this competition, skaters skate up the ramp as fast as possible in order to achieve the highest jump. If the player clicks the button at just the right instant, it adds to the score. If he clicks at the wrong instant, the skater ends up as a black smudge at the bottom of the ramp.

The final event is the freestyle ramp. This contest allows Aerials, Ollies, and Rock-n-rolls, among others. For the uninitiated, these are types of skateboard tricks. An Aerial is any move which causes all the wheels of the board to be off the ground at the same time; an Ollie is an Aerial where the skater does not grab the board with his hands; and a Rock-n-Roll is a move which balances the board on an object (usually, the side of a ramp or pool) so that each pair of wheels is on a different side of the object before the skater does a kickturn and rides back. Those who try too hard to impress their "Betties" (girls) can end up bouncing off the bleachers and literally knocking one's socks off. Other tricks include: Backside-air (an Aerial where the skater faces the ground with his back to the sky), Frontside-air (the same except the skater's back is to the ground), Handplant (a one-handed handstand where the skater holds the board to his feet with the other hand), Kickturn (the basic move with the board's tail down, nose up, and board turning), and Rail Slide (a Rock-n-Roll done while sliding the board along the edge of the ramp).

Skate or Die is an enjoyable game for teenage board freaks who cannot get enough radical action on the cement or "over-the-hill" adults who don't want to risk their lives and limbs to experience the simulated thrill of this action sport. It might just save a few skinned up knees and broken bones (not to mention a few bucks at the emergency room) for a lot of us. Action enthusiasts should get plenty of satisfaction from Skate or Die.

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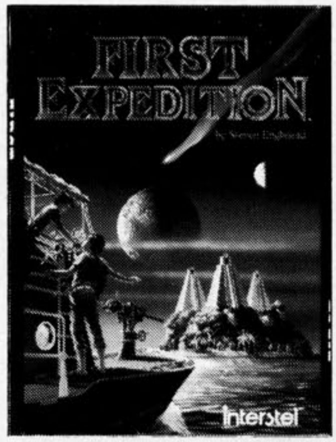
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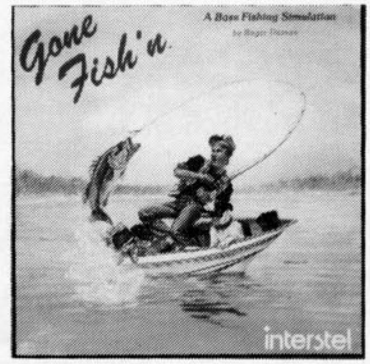
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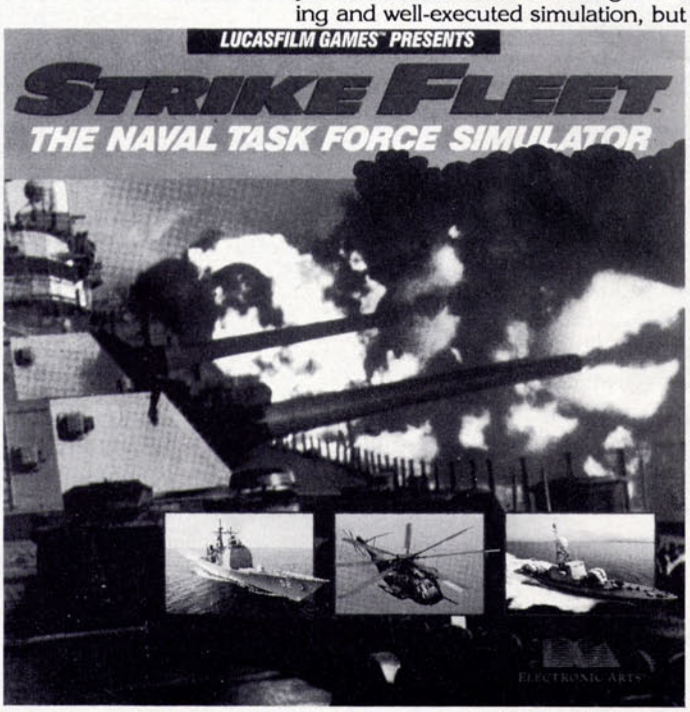
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Strike Fleet

by M. Evan Brooks

Strike Fleet is **Lucasfilm Games**' follow-on to *PHM Pegasus*. While Pegasus had state-of-the-art accuracy and graphics, this reviewer noted "a certain sameness and/or lack of elan" (cf. *CGW*, No. 39). Additional reflection over time has yielded the conclusion that Pegasus was an interesting and well-executed simulation, but of a topic which intrinsically was not that exciting.



Happily, Strike Fleet does not have a lack of excitement. Bearing the graphics and historical accuracy that Pegasus possessed, this production is a more varied, challenging and enjoyable simulation.

TITLE:	Strike Fleet
SYSTEMS:	C-64, Apple II
PRICE:	$29.95 (Commodore) $34.95 (Apple)
DESIGNERS:	Noah Falstein, Ken Macklin, and Larry Holland
PUBLISHER:	Electronic Arts San Mateo, CA

Modern naval warfare seems to be the newest cycle of simulation games with numerous titles on the subject due for release in 1988. Strike Fleet has its emphasis on modern surface combat—an aspect virtually ignored both in the simulation industry and in the navy itself. Any discussion with active duty Navy personnel will quickly yield the conclusion that the movers and shakers are in the submarine and air arms—not in the surface fleet. In fact, the only time one really hears of the surface fleet is when it screws up, a la *Stark*. The Surface Warriors, however, do have a role in modern naval warfare, albeit not the glorious one of a Nelson or Mahan.

Fresh as the Morning's Headlines

Strike Fleet offers numerous scenarios which are topical and fresh. Beginning with the *Stark* reality, one sails his frigate in the Persian Gulf. Obviously bearing a close resemblance to history, standing orders are not to fire until fired upon (strategically, there does not seem to be a purpose; however, that fault lies in the Oval Office and not in the design parameters). Watching a possible Iranian gunboat and an Iraqi jet close, one can feel a true sense of queasiness. Who will fire first?—The answer is either or both!

This scenario is a learning tool. Its only flaw is that an American first fire immediately yields a loss. However, a US warship would (or should) not allow a possible enemy to close to engagement range. Firing a shot across the bows is a time-tested Naval version of establishing territoriality. Despite this, the scenario succeeds in that one learns the system and develops a true sense of paranoia at sea.

Later scenarios offer two British frigates hunting Argentine submarines and two undergunned British warships engaging three Argentine frigates in the Falklands War; escorting reflagged Kuwaiti tankers into and out of the Persian Gulf; and finally—World War III: surface, air and sub-hunting combat off Iceland and Norway in five varied scenarios—of which the last four scenarios can be linked into a campaign game!

Mechanics and Tactics

Strike Fleet literally puts the user on the bridge. After choosing a scenario, one can (and should) tailor his force into an optimum mix. With helicopters, anti-ship/anti-air/anti-submarine missiles, torpedoes, chaff and phalanx systems, a relatively complete and varied weapons system is assembled and ready for combat. One can shift the CIC (Command Information Center) into three zoom positions, but generally, most of the time will be spent on the bridge. Here, navigation and warfare are brought to a fine edge.

Helicopters are very important. Their ability to find surface targets and remotely target them back to their fleet offers a wider strike option. Against submarines, helicopters are the tool of preference. While ship sonar is longer-ranged, the ships should maintain a discreet distance from the subsurface forces. An incoming torpedo is almost impossible to evade. Thus, the best way to combat submarines is to find them and use the helicopter to fix and destroy these insidious creatures of the deep.

Anti-ship missiles against warships are relatively useless. While such a statement goes against Naval sentiment, one can quickly see that the anti-air missiles usually neutralize the bulk of incoming anti-ship missiles until both sides are forced back to old-time gunnery tactics.

The worst threat is a combined assault by air, surface and submarines. While radar can pick up the first two threats, unless one is alert to proper use of sonar, enemy submarines can penetrate the perimeter and cause severe damage. Luckily, the scenarios herein do not have a true combined arms attack. Usually, one can beat off the surface fleet and turn to the submarine threat. If a scenario offered a more cohesive submarine and surface assault, the American forces would have little chance of survival in the hostile waters of the North Atlantic.

Often, long periods of ennui will be interspersed with short spurts of intensive combat and terror. Since one will often use time compression to speed things along, the following tactical hint has been offered by EA: when using time compression, save the

game every 1-2 minutes. Then when an enemy submarine or surface vessel is encountered, go back to the last save and slow down to realistic speeds. A VERY artificial means, the fact remains that it does work. Is it cheating? Look, the computer won't make the accusation and who else is to know?

Naval Doctrine and Strike Fleet

Ever since 1890, Naval Strategy has been derived from Alfred Mahan's *The Influence of Seapower Upon History*. Perhaps the most critical (and most misunderstood) concept of Mahan is that "it is the possession of that overbearing power on the sea which drives the enemy's flag from it . . . This overbearing power can only be exercised by great navies". A literal application of such a principle would lead to a reliance on surface and big ship combatants. However, Mahan was referring to the arm of decision in his era—the battleship (and later, the dreadnought); the big navy (i.e. the battleship) was superseded during World War II by the carrier , and in the modern world by the submarine. While many will argue this last point, this reviewer feels that the nuclear submarine is the capital ship of the contemporary era.

With its weaponry and ability to penetrate surface forces, the submarine is the weapon most to be feared. Strike Fleet portrays this threat and the fact that there is little defense against a modern submarine other than to find and destroy it before it can engage.

The Maritime Strategy espoused by the United States Navy envisages up to sixteen CAGs (Carrier Air Groups) and the penetration of the Kola peninsula so that the Backfire bombers and nuclear submarines can be destroyed before they break out into the Atlantic. Strike Fleet does not show the effect of carrier air groups. In fact, the only real airpower in the game consists of Soviet backfire bombers (Are the designers trying to tell us something?). Nevertheless, the overall effect of a modified first strike into the lion's den is sufficient to guarantee sleepless nights for many a Navy captain.

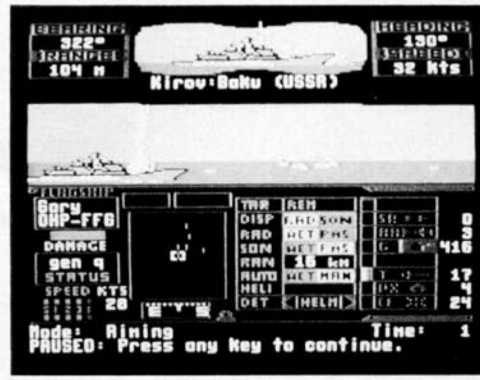
Whether or not the carrier can survive in a modern weapons intensive environment is a subject of much debate. While Strike Fleet does not attempt to answer this question, the sheer intensity and destructiveness of the World War III scenarios will give the user much food for thought.

The Pluses

(1) Graphics are superbly executed;

(2) Weapons systems do seem to reflect reality. One will note that generally, US missile systems require multiple strikes to sink Soviet vessels, while Soviet missiles can generally sink American destroyers and frigates with a single hit. This is probably true—American Harpoon and Tomahawk anti-ship missiles are much lighter than their Soviet counterparts. While their technical superiority may be greater, the magnitude does not appear to be of a sufficient differential to make up for the weight deficiency thereof.

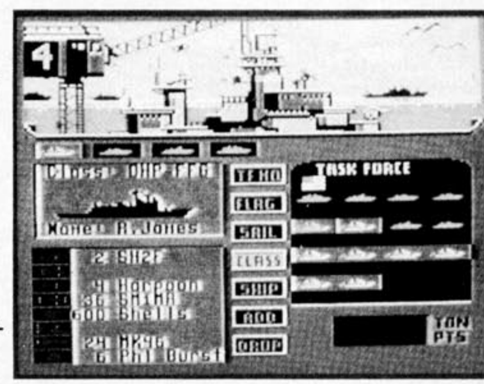
(3) Remote Targeting is well done. Using the LAMPS helicopters to remotely target enemy vessels or naval vessels to remotely target enemy submarines for the helicopters is an accurate reflection of modern surface warfare.



Combat Screen

(4) Time compression is handled a la Pegasus, i.e. if little is happening, time may be compressed up to 128 times real speed. This allows one to avoid long stretches of boredom followed by short periods of sheer terror.

(5) Task Force Tailoring allows one to develop optimal surface fleets for the mission. For example, Scenario 9.7 has two US frigates and a Spruace-class destroyer attempting to defeat a Soviet invasion of Norway. Using the default task force is an exercise in frustration. The destroyer only carries 8 anti-aircraft missiles, while the frigates carry 36 each. With the skies literally filled with anti-ship missiles from the larger Soviet fleet, the American destroyer is relatively useless except as a target. Since the destroyer has twice the point value of the frigates, one would be better advised to substitute two frigates for the destroyer and then engage the Russian Bear.



Task Force Screen

(6) The Gun System is enjoyable. Given the smaller caliber of the guns herein (generally 5-inch), multiple hits are required to sink an enemy vessel. This is realistic and yields a sense of combat on the high seas. See Minuses, however.

(7) CIC/Bridge Interface allows one to switch from the strategic to the tactical aspect of the situation with a single keystroke.

(8) Sonar/Radar is well presented in that active modes are more effective, although they also present one's own forces as a better target. The trade-off is for the user to decide upon.

(9) User Input may be done by joystick or keyboard, or both. This allows maximum flexibility for the user.

The Minuses

(1) The Bridge Interface: This aspect reflects a deliberate design decision. In order to use the weapons system from a particular ship, one must switch to the bridge of that particular ship. With a fleet of up to 17 ships, this bridge-switching is overly artificial. A fleet commander cannot be physically present on the bridges of all of his ships; yet, even with the unrealism, one must admit that this does yield a sense of combat confusion. While ships can be maneuvered on automatic mode, weapons sys-

tems cannot; an automatic weapons employment would have yielded a more realistic feel.

(2) The Gun System, while fun, is not realistic. The Soviet gunnery is extremely inaccurate. Also, range-finding is done by cross-hair targeting. Often, one will discover that "one up" is too high, and "one down" is too low. One then has to wait for the range to close or shift speeds or targets. In reality, a shot group as above would yield a command of "Up (or down) one-half, Fire for Effect".



Combat Information Center Screen

(3) Chaff Defensive Systems seem to be inefficient defensive tools. This may be historically accurate, but additional background information of employment and efficiency would have been appreciated.

(4) Remote Targeting is sometimes unrealistic in that LAMPS with a historical role of surface-searching can often pick up Soviet Backfire bombers at a range of 300 km.

(5) Depth Warnings may prove fatal; certain Persian Gulf scenarios will warn one that certain ships are entering shallow water. A strategic view will not reveal the shoals, and it is sometimes impossible to extricate a ship before it runs aground and/or sinks.

(6) Game Saves are easy; however, one may only save one per pre-formatted disk. It would have been nice to have an option to allow formatting within the program, as do many SSI products.

The Might-Have-Beens

The following are not criticisms inasmuch as options that would have been appreciated:

(1) The ability to command from the Soviet side;

(2) A fuller design kit; with the ability to develop task forces from the shipyard, a wider-ended option would have permitted the user to develop his own scenarios. The geographic areas are more than sufficient; all one would need is an ability to choose forces from both sides, set objectives and run.

Conclusions

Strike Fleet is a highly recommended product. With its fine graphics, execution and sheer enjoyability, this view of surface naval warfare should not be missed by anyone remotely interested in the topic. Its negative aspects do not in any way counteract the positive impact of this product.

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RAMPARTS AND RODENTS

A Look at Two Action Adventure Dungeons

by Yung Min Choi

Though the dungeon had already netted buckets of treasure for the warrior, he still wasn't satisfied. He was elated when he spied yet another treasure chest hidden behind a crumbling wall. Once he determined that there were no ghosts, grunts, monsters, demons, or traps in the small chamber, he lifted his battleaxe and broke down the remainder of the crumbling wall.



Stepping quickly into the dark anteroom, he pulled a key from among his possessions and pushed it into the rusty padlock which held the chest closed. He twisted the key in the rusted padlock and felt it give. Just as it finally sprung open, something scurried across his feet. The warrior grabbed his axe and turned to face . . . a huge sewer rat!

TITLE:	Demon Stalkers
SYSTEM:	C-64/128
# PLAYERS:	1-2
PRICE:	$29.95
DESIGNER:	Micro Forte'
PUBLISHER:	Electronic Arts San Mateo, CA

Both games discussed in this article are part of the search-the-dungeon, find-the-treasure, cast-the-spell, and slay-the-monster genre of action games. *Gauntlet* is based on the coin-operated arcade game developed and marketed by **Atari**. *Demon Stalkers* (DS) is similar in design and graphics. Both offer a multitude of dungeon levels. DS has 100 levels on the original scenario disk and players who utilize the construction set included with the game can create an unlimited number of levels. Players who complete the many levels of Gauntlet will find the offer of 500 additional levels on **Mindscape**'s *The Deeper Dungeons* data disk to be very attractive.

Characters and Caricatures

Gauntlet allows the choice of characters to play. Choices include warriors, wizards, valkyrie, and elves. In DS, the choice is more limited. Players in the latter game will either be the blue guy or the green guy. This difference is not important because the players only need to be able to discern their character from that of playing companions. All should remember enough game etiquette to resist the temptation to sit back and laugh while another player's characters are pummeled to death. I laughed at my spouse for not fighting back, only to be rudely informed that it was *my* character that was being slaughtered.

Monsters behave differently in each game. Most monsters must make contact with the player's character to do damage, but some monsters use ranged weapons. For instance, Gauntlet's demons shoot fireballs from their mouths. Talk about unholy spit! In fact, Gauntlet's dungeon is packed full of monsters from the beginning level onward. Players have little choice but to wade into the pile of ghosts and start slashing away. Gauntlet seemed to have ten times more monsters than DS. Thus, despite the similarities, Gauntlet is primarily an action game and Demon Stalkers is a search game with action thrown in.

One strategy which proved successful in both games was retreat. Whenever it is possible to avoid a conflict with monsters, players should choose to avoid them. When this is impossible, try blasting the monster generators before blasting the monsters. Discerning players will discover that by concentrating on the monsters, the monster generators continue to manufacture monsters until the players find themselves outnumbered. Monster generators are piles of bones and square machines in Gauntlet and bubble-like vortexes in DS.

One villain who should be avoided at any cost is Gauntlet's "Death." This enemy's touch drains 200 health points at a shot. Also, players cannot destroy him with physical attacks. The only type of attack that "death" is vulnerable to is a magical attack.

Potions and Potables

Common to both games are keys and food. Keys unlock both doors and treasure chests. Food restores lost health points. Gauntlet restores 100 points for each plate of cold food or jug of cider ingested. DS offers a variety of foods such as elf cakes, bread and water, or banquets. Each type of food restores a different number of health points. Players should partake of as many meals as possible in the dungeons, because the health points a player possesses is proportional to the amount of time he is able to play.

Other items found in Gauntlet's dungeons are potions that are collected to give players special bonus powers. Potions include: extra armor to add protection, extra shot speed to allow a faster rate of weapon fire, extra shot power to increase damage, and extra fight power to increase hand-to-hand combat ability.

Demon Stalkers adds scrolls with messages on them. These scrolls can give useful information, contain magic spells, or simply tease and tantalize players. The scrolls also give occasional instructions that are necessary for successful play, such as "Players must open all chests before leaving this level."

Exits and Excavations

The "Dungeon Construction Set" in DS adds to the value of the game. It is simple to use. Apprentice dungeon designers use a joystick "point and click" routine to add walls, traps, monsters, treasures, or any of the other numerous options. Players can build a small portion of a level and then, playtest it to see if it will hold their interest. It is wise to put only a few monsters in the first level of a player design. I had to re-edit my first level because I made it much too difficult. Also, the speed at which the monster generating vortex functions is up to the player in this mode, so be careful not to plan a vortex that functions too rapidly.

There are some differences between the two programs. Gauntlet players will find that there is no turning back once a level has been exited. DS players will find that the game allows its players access to most levels. If a player awakens the sleeping mutant plants in the little dungeon of horrors, for example, he can simply step back up the stairs to the previous level. Even if he returns instantly, he will find the plants have returned to sleep.

There are times between levels in Demon Stalkers when players are given a portion of the story of Arthur and his companions who went into the dungeons to stop the demonic Calvrak. After the story portion is told, a question from that story is asked of the players. No, the program is not testing reading comprehension. Instead, it will award a health bonus for a correct answer. Further, some of the levels in DS require Arthur's Magic Cipher, the familiar codewheel copy protection, in order to gain access. Gauntlet does not use this method.

Players who are undecided about which game they would rather spend their money on can send two dollars to **Electronic Arts** for a three level demonstration disk of Demon Stalkers (see CGW #44, February, p. 45 for details). In reality, players who crave this type of action will not be disappointed with either game. Both games allow players the opportunity to go from . . . er . . . rats to riches, a chance to go from being waist deep in monsters to waist deep in money.



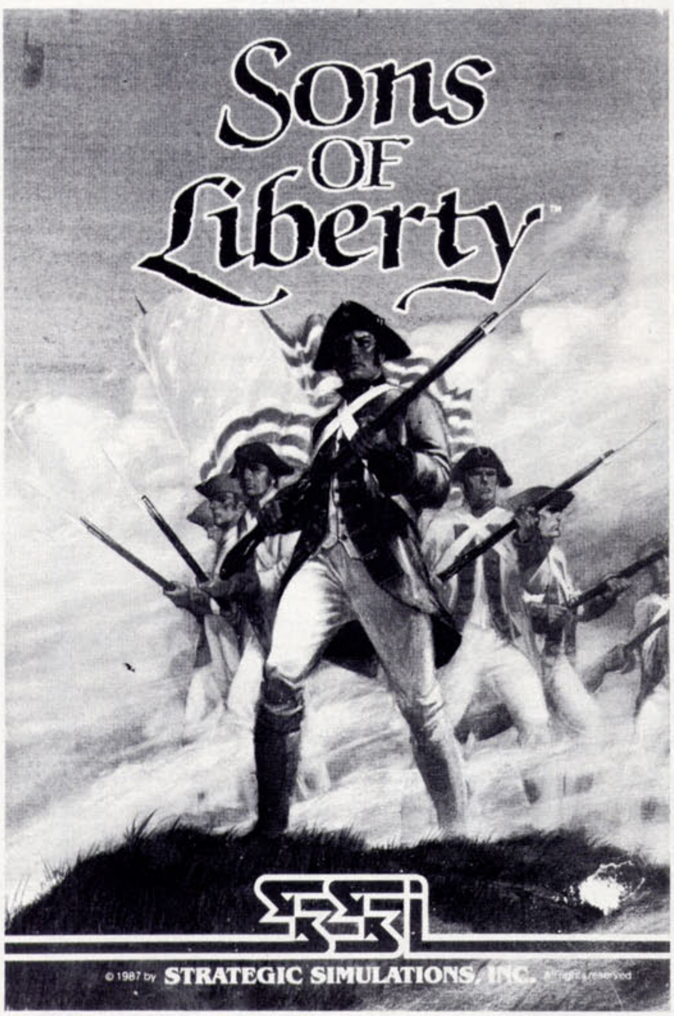
TITLE:	Gauntlet
SYSTEMS:	Atari 8-bit, C-64/128 Atari ST
# PLAYERS:	1-2
PRICE:	$29.95
DESIGNER:	Atari Games Corporation
PUBLISHER:	Mindscape, Inc. Northbrook, IL

THE WHITES OF THEIR EYES

Strategic Simulations' American Revolutionary War Release

Reviewed by Wyatt Lee

The hiss of the flashpans and the whoosh of the musket balls become the center of focus in *Sons of Liberty* (SOL), a new American Revolutionary War simulation from **Strategic Simulations, Inc.**. The game has the look, feel, and playability of the company's (and the designers') American Civil War series, but with subtle differences. First, there seems to be a greater disparity in morale between the well-disciplined British troops and the largely volunteer army of the fledgling United States than there was between Union and Confederate troops in the previous games (*Rebel Charge at Chickamauga* would be an exception to this, as the South had vastly superior efficiency to the North in that simulation). This means, particularly in the Bunker Hill scenario, that some units will immediately rout after they first undergo casualties. This is not as likely to happen in the Saratoga (Freeman's Farm) or Monmouth scenarios, as they reflect a later point in the war (and are closer to the ACW simulations in that regard). Second, because of the nature of the British army as opposed to the rebel American forces, it is next to impossible for the Americans to win a melee combat. Third, the ranges are, of necessity, shorter to reflect the earlier weaponry. Finally, SOL is not a simulation of one particular battle. Rather, the game contains three different battles (Bunker Hill, Monmouth, and Saratoga) which require somewhat different approaches.



TITLE:	Sons of Liberty
SYSTEMS:	Apple II (64K), C-64/128
# PLAYERS:	1-2
PRICE:	$39.95
DESIGNERS:	David Landrey and Chuck Kroegel
PUBLISHER:	Strategic Simulations, Inc. Mountain View, CA

In a departure on the documentation, the game comes with two different manuals and the three battle maps rather than the one large manual. The first manual (*Rule Book*) simply deals with the mechanics of play; and the second, the *Historical Reference Guide*, offers a wealth of historical background, maps, data tables, and strategy notes (as well as a historical narrative on Breed's Hill). Otherwise, the standard features of the system are all here. Players still move units via the standard keyboard configuration, units are still dependent upon operations points to move and maneuver; morale continues to be determined by efficiency minus fatigue; game turns consistently represent an hour of real time; the game still utilizes the same unit symbols in the intermediate and advanced games (although the icons for the basic game have been redesigned); facing and flank attacks are present in the two upper difficulty levels; and fortification building options and ammunition supply rules are utilized in the advanced game.

SOL captures the flavor of the Revolutionary War with regard to the more traditional battles which took place in the north. No one has yet attempted to simulate the glorious antics of "The Swamp Fox" and his band of guerilla fighters (or even the more set battles of King's Mountain, Cowpens, and Guilford Courthouse) in the south. These battles depended heavily upon finding the right high ground for effective artillery use and using terrain and breastworks to full advantage in defense. The effective fire of American rifle units from long range and the devastating British capacity for adjacent fire (reflecting a greater discipline and cohesion) proves most visible in the Saratoga scenario.

Bunker Hill (Breed's Hill)

When the computer plays the British side, the artificial intelligence routines almost always attempt to flank Prescott's redoubt on top of Breed's Hill by moving along the road which runs through 18,10. This technique is effective because it keeps Prescott's Thousand from firing upon the redcoats until they are in a position to fire upon Prescott and Brewer. In point of fact, this is also not a bad strategy for human players to use when playing the British side. Unfortunately, for those who prefer a more historical approach, this means that the British do not attempt to take the redoubt or storm the fence (which is heavily manned, albeit by troops with low morale) with the overconfidence of the historical troops. The American can almost always win a major victory against the computer opponent, but he must remain pretty much in place in order to accomplish this.

Because of this static defense, many human

players will not want to play the American side of this scenario and will simply accept the default of playing the British. However, if you *do* choose to play the American side history can be emulated. Remember that the fledgling army was not nearly as effective in melee as the British line troops, so it was important to inflict as much damage as possible from a distance. This means that artillery is important, so the American player must keep that artillery in position to be able to fire almost anywhere on the field of battle. It also means that the infantry units need to maintain their defensive positions as long as possible and keep firing at the British at long range. Remember that the revolutionary sharpshooters were much more effective in ordinary fire than the British regulars who, in actuality, fired many rounds harmlessly over the rebel's heads. Conversely, the British will want to outflank the Americans on that southern flank of Breed's Hill and close upon the rebel units as swiftly as possible.

Monmouth

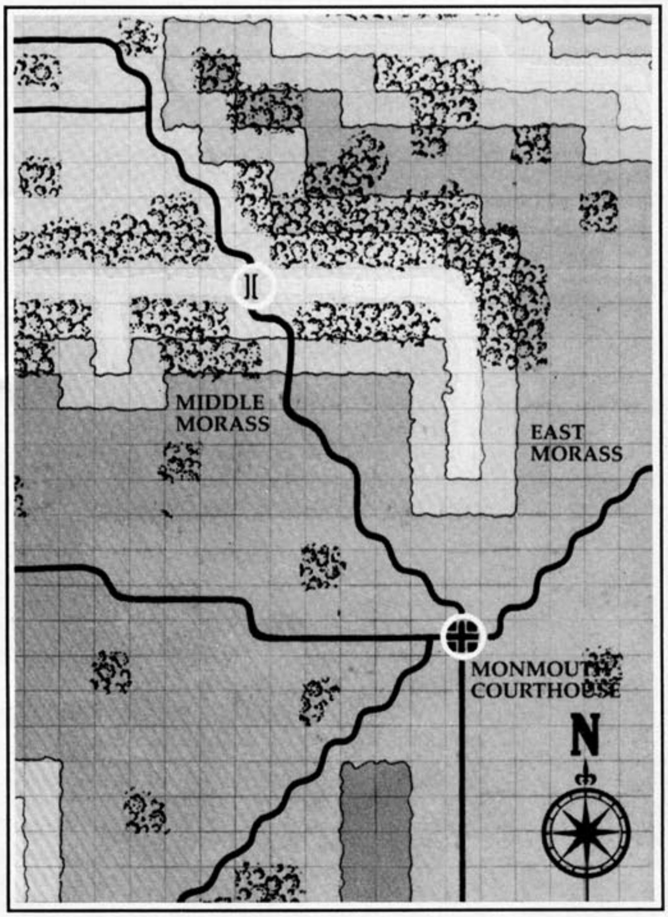
Monmouth begins with deceptive ease for the American troops. The British player should not lose heart, however, for the tide of battle switches quickly enough. The historical situation involved the harassment of Clinton's retreat. The Americans were simply trying to inflict enough damage that Clinton could not retreat in force. Instead, what began as a successful attack became a speedy withdrawal. British reinforcements, which appear at the end of the second turn in the scenario, proved superior to the rebels and forced the U. S. forces back. Yet, Washington was prepared for this, planned a fallback position with artillery in position on a ridge and was able to hold the center. The battle degenerated into an artillery duel with Clinton eventually forced to withdraw.

This scenario follows the historical flow of battle extremely well. This reviewer tried several approaches to holding a defensive line without retreating and they were all to no avail. The British reinforcements are simply too overwhelming. While it is true that the city, Monmouth, does offer a protected defensive position, it is also true that it is impossible to keep the British from eventually surrounding it and devastating the troops inside. One can hold off the inevitable only so long. Superior British forces and efficiency force the American player to follow a historical strategy. Even if the American could hold off the British until Green, Stirling, and Smallwood arrived on the scene, the reinforcements would be so fatigued by the time they arrived that they would rout after first combat.

It appears at the start that there are significantly greater totals of American forces noted on the menu screens and in the order of battle. Note, however, that half of these total forces are American reinforcements that will not arrive until the scenario is half over.

Saratoga

Of the three scenarios, Saratoga this is probably the best balanced. The British have a slight advantage in morale, while the Americans have a slight advantage in numbers. The British have the advantage in artillery. Nevertheless, there are almost the same number of victory point squares for both sides which means that there is equal opportunity for offensive forays. In fact, the documentation suggests three different strategies which can work for the Americans in this scenario.



Historically, the terrain (particularly the woods) helped the Americans. That this is true in the game may be reflected by the fact that the British player is warned in the documentation not to allow U. S. penetration too far into the woods where General Burgoyne's reinforcement units enter or the British player will be forced to spend the rest of the game trying to dig the rebels out.



Tactical View of Monmouth

Incremental Improvement

In summary, one must note that each release in the "American Civil War" series showed refinements over the previous game. SOL is no exception. It combines the user-friendliness and playability of the previous series with an understanding of the problems of an earlier period's warfare and refinements to the system, as well as careful scenario design, to capture the flavor of 18th Century warfare. Not only does this reviewer heartily recommend SOL to all who enjoyed the ACW series, but urges SSI to start planning a sequel which emphasizes the southern battles.

Deathlord

by Scorpia

In *Deathlord*, the major objective of the game is to acquire five special artifacts, learn seven magic words, and then, take your party down into hell to battle it out with the Deathlord. In other words, it's your typical CRPG scenario of locating and destroying a central evil figure.

Land of the Setting Sun

You begin by creating a party of six characters, choosing from among sixteen different professions and eight races. All of the professions and most of the races have Japanese or quasi-Japanese names, but it's easy to see that the Kishi are Paladins; Shizen are Druids; Yabanjin are Barbarians; Yakuza are thieves; Shisai are Priests; and Ryoshi are Rangers. Then, deciding on the actual party makeup can be a bewildering task. There are seven fighter types (with no apparent necessity for so many), plus ninja, assassins, thieves, four magic-user types, a hybrid ninja/magic-user, and a peasant (?). On top of that, you choose from standard RPG races. It takes a long time to wade through it all and get a party together.



TITLE:	Deathlord
SYSTEM:	Apple II
PRICE:	$49.95
DESIGNERS:	Al Escudero and David Wong
PUBLISHER:	Electronic Arts San Mateo, CA

Manual Austerity

The table in the manual which shows minimum attributes required for each class is often incorrect. Go with what you see on your screen during the roll-up phase. The manual also omits pertinent information about some of the character classes. For example, in addition to being fighters, the Kishi also cast Priest spells. However, nowhere is it mentioned how long it takes for the Kishi to obtain a new level of spells (a very long time!). Kishi do not obtain second-level spells until they are twelfth-level in experience, third-level spells at twenty-fourth level, and fourth-level spells at level 40.

The weapons/armor tables are also inconsistent. For instance, the table on page six tells you that Mahotsukai and Genkai can wear no armor and use no weapons. The table on page nine tells you that these same two classes can wear cloaks and use daggers or staffs as weapons (this, by the way, is correct). Even worse, the table on page nine is by no means clear about exactly what armor can be worn by the various fighter classes (among others). Under Samurai, for example, is listed Harame-do (leather). Is this the most or the least he can wear? Probably the latter, since Samurai are even capable of wearing plate mail. The only sure way to determine what a character can wear or use is to trade items around and check armor class.

No Class At All

Yakuza are relatively worthless. They not only go up very slowly in level, but almost anyone in the party can perform Yakuza functions such as picking locks (with a lockpick), searching for traps and secret doors, and disarming chests (automatic attempt upon opening). The Shizen is not an especially helpful class in most instances because many Shizen spells function only outdoors. They do not have decent offensive spells that work indoors or out until fifth level. Unfortunately, you *need* a Shizen because of three spells they, and only they, have.

One tells how far down the party is in a dungeon. The second locates land when you're at sea. The third cures disease. Actually, the *Shisai* class *should* be able to cure disease since the Shisai in the temples can do so.

Out of Alignment

Having chosen race and profession, you decide on the sex and alignment of your character. Neither has any particular effect in the game (though some classes have restrictions on alignment). Alignment has little bearing on game play. One time, my party of good characters deliberately, and without provocation, killed someone in a town.

Naturally all the guards came running, but after they had been disposed of, all my good characters were still listed as being of good alignment. Other people would still talk to me and the merchants would still buy and sell goods. So good, evil, or neutral has no meaning here. Alignment seems to have been added in imitation of other games, with no thought to checks and effects.

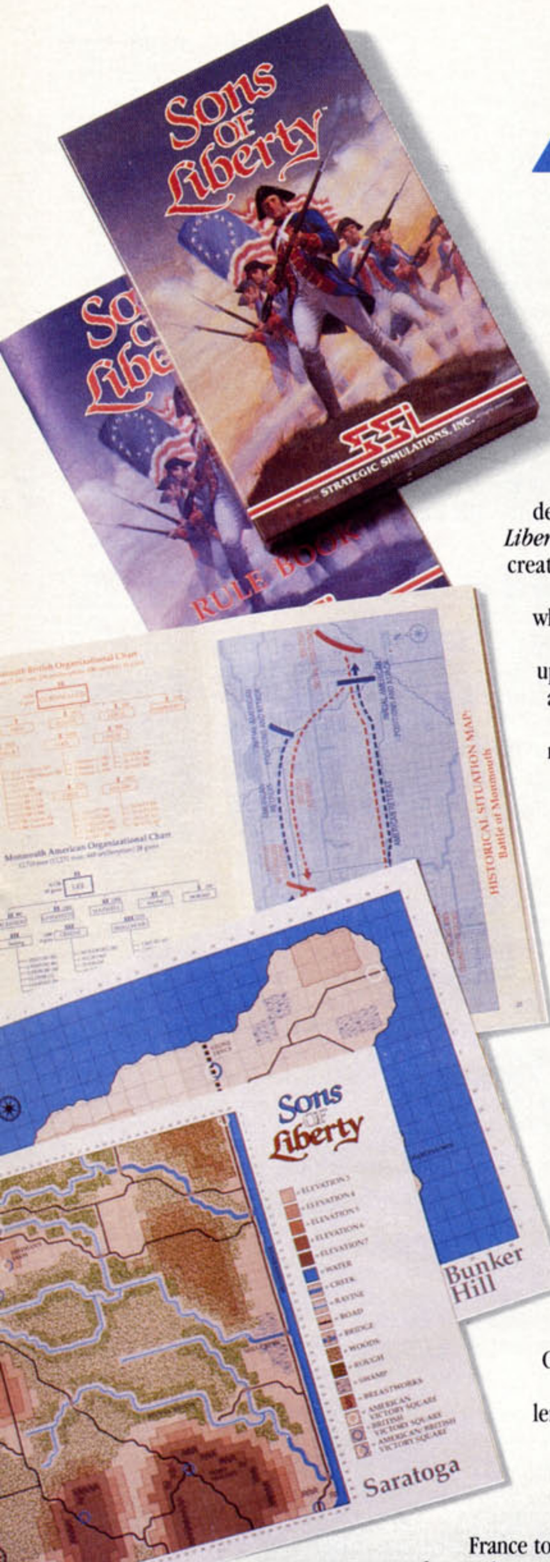
Utility of Futility

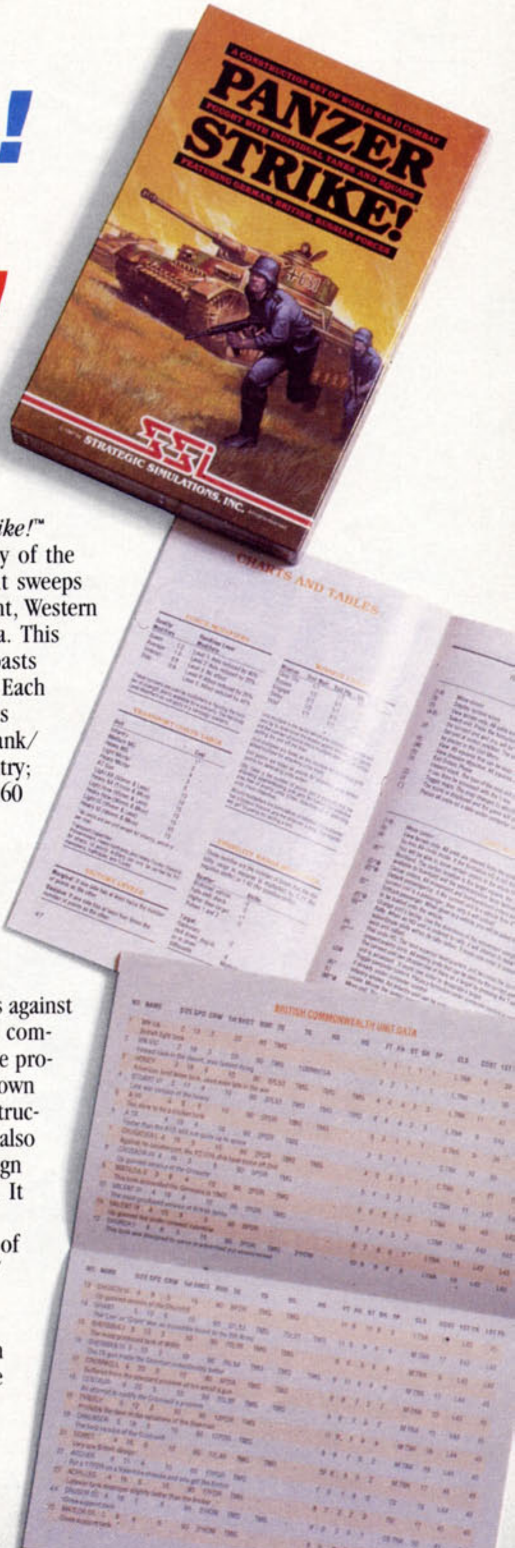
Of course, after all you've been through, it would be a good idea to back up the characters first . . . just in case something unpleasant happens. This can be difficult. Newly-created characters are placed on a roster and you choose from this roster when assembling a party (more than six characters are allowed on the roster). When all party members have been chosen, the team is given a name and saved to disk.

There *is* a utility on the main disk that allows you

(Continued on page 48)

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KNIGHT ORC

by Alan Roberts

You wake up with a splintering headache. Your fellow orcs have abandoned you, you are tied to a horse, and there's a knight over there who's going to kill you in a few moments. You get the feeling that this is not going to be one of your better days.

So begins Knight Orc. It is primarily a text adventure, although all but the Apple II version have pull down graphics. But don't get too excited about the graphics. I'll touch on that later.



KnightOrc is divided into three adventures, in which the gamer plays the part of a lowly orc with ambition. Part one is a stand-alone adventure. In parts two and three, players can move from adventure to adventure at will, but it is impossible to solve either independently. Giving the command "Raise Visor," places one as a robot in a futuristic mirror-image of the fantasy world in part two (Those who've read Piers Anthony's *Split Infinity* may feel a certain deja vu). To return to Orc's Head Tower, one merely puts the visor back on.

Title:	Knight Orc
System:	Amiga, Atari ST, IBM, Macintosh, C-64/128, Apple II
Price:	$44.95 (16 bits) $39.95 (8 bits)
Designer:	Level 9 Computing
Publisher:	Firebird/Rainbird Waldwick, NJ

An Orc's-Eye View

(**Beware:** The following sections have specific information regarding the game. If readers wish to avoid hints, they should skip to *Inconclusive Conclusions*.)

Loosed Orc (At the end of your rope)

Soon after starting the game, the above-mentioned knight comes thundering at you. Tilt! Fortunately, the crowd leaves you for dead in a rubbish heap. You are deep in enemy turf, and you'd better get home before you're spotted. However, your brother orcs have demolished the only bridge across the ravine . . . .

Points are awarded for each ten-foot length of rope you can lay your gauntlets on. For example, take that Green Knight over there (Arthurian fans, take note!). Surely you could talk him out of his reigns. This is a good spot to save, by the way. The first time you approach him, he is "cooperative." After that, he's death on horseback. Other segments can be found in the castle, tower, crossroads, well, gibbet, clearing, fairgrounds, cave, and royal oak. Find all ten to get full score, although you can swing through with only nine.

A Kind of Magic (Stay for a Spell)

Having returned to Orc's Head Tower, you are warmly greeted by your buddies, who take everything you pilfered in the previous section. As they say, you can't take it with you. Of course, you have more pressing concerns.

In part two, you have to find and master twenty-one different spells. Generally, you'll recognize spells because they're in upper case. The command "cast [spell] on [object]" will do the trick.

Begin by wandering around the ol' homestead. This is where you'll find the first spell (it's hard to miss). Your chief has something you need, but you'll have to bargain for it. Next, visit the haunted house, the rose garden, a forest clearing and the swamp. Each location has spells you can pick up on your own, the rest call for assistance. There are two spells in the necropolis, but wait until you have some allies before you go. Getting spells at the troll bridge and at the castle are best left for the end of the game.

Hordes of the Mountain King (Raw Recruits)

The object of this section is to make "friends". The first item of business is to find the recruiting device. You'll need an item from the haunted house to get through.

Go back to part two and get as many spells as you can before returning to part three. Gather all the allies you can (all four) and escape!

Here, There be Hints!

Don't bother with the loot, especially in part one. It'll only get you killed by those mean ol' humans. If you feel compelled to get all the treasure you come across (old hobbits are hard to break) put them in a container.

Read the novella that comes with the play guide. There are some hints there.

The frog has a spell written on a smooth pebble. Catching the mouse takes persistence (kind of like getting a babel fish . . .).

To get past the troll, gather every scrap of silver

you can find and let her follow you away from the bridge, letting her steal one item at a time. After a half)dozen such moves, drop the rest run to the bridge, and break into her apartment. Save early and save often. Random events can foul up your plans.

If you've read *Lord of the Rings*, the ring shouldn't be too hard to deal with.

Keep moving. If you wait in one place too long, you'll be recognized and mugged.

Inconclusive Conclusions (Or Death Where is Thy Sting?)

I have mixed feelings about some features. You will die frequently in this game. However, in a few turns, you will be thrown out of paradise and take up where you left off. While encouraging more adventurous adventuring, death should be an end rather than an irritation.

Throw away the paper and pencil. The territory covered in this game is so large that mapping is almost impossible. However, the "go to ____" command works on places you've never been to.

You can find things you've never seen, even if they're hidden, with the "find ____" command. This is giving the players a break they don't deserve.

The digitized art work is a disappointment. It takes up too much space (on the disks and on the screen) and is not nearly as good as Firebird's *Pawn* or *Guild of Thieves*. I turned the graphics off almost immediately.

"You Are Tied To A Horse, And There's A Knight Over There Who's Going To Kill You In A Few Moments. You Get The Feeling That This Is Not Going To Be One Of Your Better Days."

The puzzles are too uneven. Part one can be finished off in an afternoon, while some puzzles in part two will take that long even if you have the hint sheet! When random bad luck can spoil a well thought out solution, it's hard to be sure if you're on the right trail.

On the other hand, this game has the best parser I've seen in a while. Special options (available on the more powerful computers) speed the game along. The "oops" command returns you to where you were before the last move (you can keep using this command and move backwards through the game!). RAM save makes life easier, but with the "oops" command, it's almost redundant.

Overall, the game rates a strong recommendation. While it has negative points, it is certainly above average.

Deathlord

(Continued from page 44)

to back up the roster of characters. It would be fine except that characters in a party are *not* on the roster! In other words, the very people you want to back up cannot be backed up by the back-up utility.

However, all is not lost. The way to back up your party is to make a complete copy of the scenario disk (A or B) that they happen to be on. Another utility on the main disk, "Make Scenario Disk," will do this for you. Then, if something nasty occurs (such as the party being wiped out), you can re-copy from your backup to the play disk.



Combat With A Kosaku

You may be doing this fairly often in the early stages of the game. Death comes all too easily and resurrections are expensive. What makes it worse is that as soon as a character is killed (or petrified), this fact is written immediately to the disk. Turning off the computer in the middle of combat is useless. When you reboot, that character will still be dead. So, you are forced into the tedious practice of making frequent total backups of the play disk, as neither the "save game" feature nor character backup utility is of much use in saving your real position and party.

Ordinary People

When you are finally ready to adventure, you'll notice that the graphics and basic play are definitely Ultima-style. You move your party, represented by the icon of the leader, by using the IJKM keys. Arrow keys and joysticks are not supported. Additional similarity may be seen in picking up information by talking to the people in various towns. The basic command is "Orate" with its seven subcommands. Essentially, you place your party next to a citizen and initiate a conversation with Orate. From the meager information gleaned by Chat and Talk, you try to obtain more details with Inquire. Often, you get nothing more than you already have. A typical conversation might run like this: Party Chats, Citizen responds "Find Senju". Party Inquires "Senju," Citizen states "I don't know!". You will see lots of this.

Some of the citizens do have important clues, but are often lurking in out-of-the-way places or behind secret doors. Much time must be spent in tedious searching for them. This is very boring, especially in towns with a lot of shrubbery.

You can alleviate some of this boredom by breaking into people's homes (either picking the lock with a lockpick or simply smashing open the door). There is no option for politely knocking. Good or evil, you have to break in. The occupants are usually not thrilled to have you enter in this fashion. Many times, they come out ready for a fight (you can hardly blame them), so here's a handy trick for you. Let them get in the first shot. After that, you can wipe them out and the guards won't bother you.

Really. Whatever you're up against in a town, always let the opponents start combat. Presumably it's okay to defend yourself (even if you're in the wrong). Further, not everyone will attack after you've broken through the door. Some people may, at times, have little bits of information for you. There's no way of telling beforehand, so you simply have to break in and hope for the best.

Major combat activity takes place in the outdoors or in dungeons. The first three party members are the front line and are the only ones who can use weapons. The last three either use spells or pass their turns. Spellcasters having the worst armor, keep them in the rear of the group when possible.

The combat display is split among three screens and can be confusing to follow. The graphic display shows only an icon of the monsters being fought, plus the icon of the character whose turn it currently is (thus cycling through the icons of the entire group, one by one). Below this is a small window, the combat input screen, where battle commands are entered for each character in sequence. To the right is a larger screen, where the results of the character's actions and the actions and results of the monsters' attacks are displayed. Trying to follow all three of these can give you eyestrain.

Of the variety of weapons used in the game, bows are among the best (those armed with a bow get two chances to hit per round, instead of one). Samurai armed with katanas (long swords) also get to hit twice per round. Get bows for your people up front as soon as you can afford it, and katanas for the Samurai (if any) when you find a place that sells them. Amazing as it may sound, though, even armed with a bow, those in the rear cannot fight.

Only Experienced Need Apply

The game neither displays the experience level of the characters nor how much experience is gained from killing particular creatures, so there is no way of knowing how close or far a character is from the next level up. The only way to know a gain in level can be achieved is when a plus mark appears next to that character on the display. This means the character can go up to the next level, as soon as training is bought (no training, no new level).

Experience appears to come only from killing monsters, so fighters go up in level much faster than spellcasters. Once the mage types have some decent offensive spells, their progress will be a bit more rapid, but not by much. By the end of the game, one of my Samurai was well over fiftieth level, while the Mahotsukai was only somewhere over thirtieth level and both had been in the party from the beginning.

One of the more important things in the game is getting that Mahotsukai up to level 24. This brings seventh-level spells, including Unpan (which, except in Hell, teleports the party up or down in the dungeon, up to four levels at a time. This is a great time and frustration saver, especially in the dungeon behind the Red Shogun's palace.

This dungeon is seven levels deep, full of doors, and one of the most idiotic dungeons ever. Imagine a whole dungeon level with nothing but doors which have to be lockpicked or smashed to be opened. To top it all off, some of the doors aren't real and cannot be opened at all. Some people may think this is fun, interesting, or challenging, but I'm not one of them. When you get to this dungeon, head down to the bottom level with Unpan. You'll be glad you did.

The dungeons in general are tedious exercises in mapping, made worse by the absence of any sort of coordinate system. You may know how far down you are, but not exactly where in relation to anything else. This, in turn, makes it rather difficult to know just where to start your map when you reach a new level. You really won't know, until you've moved around a bit, by which time your map may be going off one edge of the paper. Careful mapping is necessary, too, or you may miss secret doors or illusionary walls in caverns (they look like real walls, but you can walk right through them).

There is also a great deal of travelling to be done in this game, much of it by ship as you try to find all the other islands. Five are shown on the map on the inside front cover of the package. You will probably never see a more misleading map.

Kodan, your starting point, is shown in the center. Off to the northeast is Chikagu (Chicago?), to the northwest is Nyuku (New York?), to the southeast is Akmihr, and to the southwest is Asagata. Now, from looking at the map and the island positions, you would think that by sailing due east from the top of Kodan you would come to Chikagu, or by sailing due west, you would come to Nyuku. In actuality, going in either direction will only bring you right back where you started from. Those islands are much further away than the map would have you believe. The same is true for the two southern islands.

This means that you are going to spend a lot of time sailing around the oceans, looking for these and other islands and is why having a Shizen in the party is so important. The land detection spell saves many hours of fruitless searching on empty seas. Even with the spell it isn't easy to locate these places, but some of the search time is cut down.

Earlier, a quest for seven magic words was mentioned. These are hidden in various dungeons (one word per dungeon, always on the bottom levels). Since there are many more than seven dungeons, it is of extreme importance that you know which ones have words and which don't. Thorough questioning in towns and villages is necessary or you may find yourself searching a dungeon for something that isn't there. The other dungeons simply provide gold and experience.

Speaking of gold, all money found after a combat or other activity goes to the party leader. A character can carry a maximum of ten thousand gold, so it's a good idea to share the wealth every now and then. Otherwise, when the leader is at the maximum, new gold found will be lost.

One of the great oddities in this game is the ability to disperse your party, anytime, anywhere. When you do this, the team is "disassembled," and all characters (along with their equipment and money) go back on the roster, from which they can be reassembled into another team. This facility can get you out of any dungeon with a minimum of fuss and trouble. The one drawback is that you will be back in Kodan again when the team is reformed, and if you were on an island other than Kodan, you will have to buy another ship (which costs an even ten thousand gold).

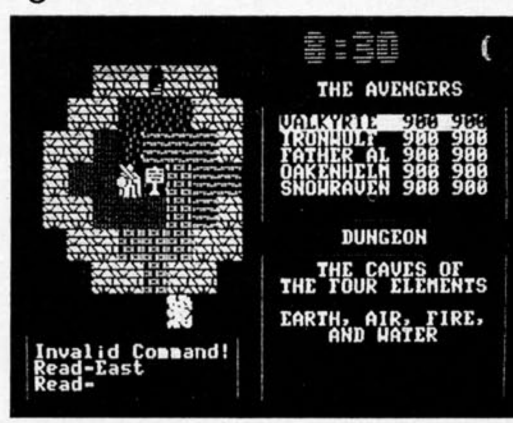


Traveling Among the 16 Continents

It is more than a little strange that the authors would put in such a facility, when at the same the time they are so adamant about making sure your dead characters stay dead by writing to disk (which in itself is a useless gesture, given backup ability).

Do You Believe in Magic?

The magic system in general is typical of most games: the spellcaster automatically learns new spells at the appropriate level, and the level of the spell determines the amount of power needed to cast it. Thus a first-level spell (of any kind) uses one point of power, a third-level spell uses three points, and so on. Power expended in spell-casting renews itself slowly as time passes in the game.



A Foray Into A Dungeon

All spells have Japanese-type names. Therefore, you'll find it necessary to keep the manual handy, since you must type in the entire name of a spell to cast it (no shortened versions or mnemonics). The manual is also unclear on the duration of some of the spells and it is difficult (if not impossible) to gauge how long a spell lasts in combat.

There are no real puzzles in the Deathlord; some dungeons may require a bit of tricky maneuvering to get around certain spots, but otherwise there is relatively little for you to figure out. The descent into Hell, the final dungeon, is no different from any other, and in some respects easier than a few of

Deathlord

them (always keeping in mind, of course, that good mapping is a must).

Speaking of Hell, one thing to be careful about down there is the use of the emerald rod (invulnerability to acid) and ruby ring (invulnerability to fire). The effects of these items lasts only a VERY short time; you must remember to stop and use them every few moves. This is both silly and annoying. At the very least, the effects of those artifacts should endure for a more reasonable period, say an hour of game time.

Considering the amount of time and effort needed to finish the game, the ending is disappointingly bland. A simple graphic screen comes up, along with some congratulatory text, and then it's over. Since you've just eliminated the major source of evil in the world, you'd expect something a bit more spectacular and appropriate to your accomplishments.

Overall, no attempt has been made to draw on the rich folklore and mythology of Japan with its interesting situations and monsters. Rather, the authors have created a compendium of standard CRPG features glossed over with a tinge of pseudo-Orientalism by pasting Japanese names on as much as they could. While it purports to be "the next step in role-playing games," there is nothing really new or noteworthy about it. Along with a manual replete with typos, omissions, inaccuracies, and contradictions, this makes Deathlord a game for the serious player to avoid.

Bottom line: A mediocre effort at best.

(Continued from page 6)

TAKING A PEEK

essentially assigned to protect the ecosystem (and hence, the world) in these fourteen inter-related and sequentially more difficult assignments. Amiga ($49.95). Circle Reader Service Card #6.

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Webster, TX 77568

FIRST EXPEDITION: Braun is a descendent of an ancient civilization which has been divided by terror and superstition. Yet, there is no hope of survival unless someone finds and replaces the three Sun Spheres, which generate the protective energy shield, before the comet Halistrom returns. All he has is an ancient nautical chart, star chart, and compass as his tools in accomplishing this. Each player takes on the role of Braun, but in a unique twist, if Braun is unable to complete the quest, players take on the role of his rescuer. IBM ($49.95). Circle Reader Service Card #7.

GONE FISH'N: A bass fishing simulation, this unique idea involves scheduling, selecting locations and lures, casting, reeling, and of course, catching fish. Once the player spots a fish in the underwater view, he still has to hook him and retrieve him. Experienced players get to participate in tournaments against random computer catches. Atari ST ($44.95). Circle Reader Service Card #8.

Paragon Software Corporation
600 Rugh Street
Greensburg, PA 15601

TWILIGHT'S RANSOM: As topical as recent headlines, this daring text adventure augmented by graphics deals with terrorism and kidnapping. Players become an emotionally involved boyfriend trying to rescue his girlfriend from her abductors. The game takes the player into inner city subcultures with vivid characterization in order to gain the clues which might lead to a rescue. Since the graphics are optional, interactive text adventure fans don't have to bother, but those who want to read and see have the opportunity. IBM ($34.95). Circle Reader Service #9.

Rainbird Software
2350 Bayshore Parkway
Mountain View, CA 94043

JINXTER: The folks at Magnetic Scrolls are determined to keep their fans off guard. Those who chuckled as they read through "Guild of Thieves" will enjoy the avant-garde humor in this pun-filled game which hitchhikes its way into the kind of zaniness found in another galaxy. The picture is from the Commodore version. Amiga, Atari ST, IBM, and Mac ($39.95), Apple II (Text only) and C-64/128 ($34.95). Circle Reader Service #10.

Spectrum Holobyte
2061 Challenger Drive
Alameda, CA 94501

TETRIS: Part of the company's new international series, this Soviet/Hungarian import is one of the most addictive games around. The simple principle involves varying shapes falling from the top of the screen and the player moving and rotating them in order to fill the blank shaft in the middle of the screen with a perfect combination of shapes. Of course, the faster the shapes fall, the more difficult it is to maneuver them and the more points players amass per building block. C-64/128 ($24.95) and IBM ($34.95). Circle Reader Service #11.

ZIG-ZAG: This is another game in the international series, but rather than being a puzzle game like "Soko-Ban" or "Tetris," this British import involves the flight of a star fighter through the so-called Matrix of Zog in order to find the Eight Crystals of Zog. Players must navigate narrow passageways, disappearing barriers, traps and timelocks in order to succeed. C-64/128 ($24.95). Circle Reader Service #12.

THUNDER MOUNTAIN
P. O. BOX 1167
Northbrook, IL 60065-1167

WINTER CHALLENGE: Here is a European import (Tynesoft) for all those frustrated with the United States' paucity of Olympic medals in the recent winter games at Calgary. These challenging arcade sequences include ski jump, downhill racing, bobsled competition, giant slalom, and biathlon. One to six players may compete. C-64/128 ($9.95)

Circle Reader Service #13

CONVERSIONS RECEIVED

For the Amiga:

Jet (subLogic)

For the Apple IIGS:

Blackjack Academy (Microillusions)

For the Atari 8-bit:

Saracen (Datasoft)

For the Atari ST:

Alien Fires 2199 A.D. (Paragon)

For the IBM:

Blackjack Academy (Microillusions)
Into the Eagle's Nest (Mindscape)
Pinball Wizard (Accolade)

(Continued from page 26)

"FOG OF WAR" A Clearer View

is plenty of information, but no time to analyze it. Orders can be issued to all within seconds, but the squad will do what the sergeant says, not the general. Most modern generals forget that all electronic transmissions are subject to being jammed. Command control is a nebulous beast, at best. Fortunately, for most generals, most subordinates will do their best to carry out orders.

A real boon in tactical computer games is that observation is easily figured out by the computer. There are no arguments about what "line of sight" was. No one ever knows exactly what the enemy is up to. If you could, there would be no "surprises." The guys on the front line will know that "Kraut" tanks are rolling over their foxholes, but not know exactly how many there are or where they are going. . . .

What about general tactical situation reports? When attacked, the reports need only indicate that "We are under __________ attack." The blank stating that the attack is light, medium, or heavy. For the right flavor, perhaps, "My Gawd, it's the whole (Enemy country name here) (army or fleet here).!"

Computers are also excellent at determining "hidden" movement. Whether it is Siberian troops saving Moscow or a German counter-attack through the Ardennes, war is full of such unpleasant surprises and a computer seems to make that much more frightening. Players could be presented with several different ways to gather information. Be it from scouting, aerial recon, or spies. Each has its limitations. The spy in the enemy general's staff may warn the player about which area will be attacked next turn, but has no idea about its tactical nature, etc.

Players should have to plan and order attacks ahead of time. Such a delay is needed to allow the enemy scouts a chance to find out about the attack and do something about it. Then, the enemy can commit reserves to the threatened sector.

What about reserves? These are units uncommitted to any other duty that can be moved immediately to meet enemy threats or exploit his weakness. That is why you have designated units in reserve, not just units that happen to be unengaged. In most games, the enemy will almost always be able to plug the hole before it is your turn again, even in a "real time" game. Thus, pointing up the need to have operations planned in advance.

Ever get the feeling that the computer has access to data when making its move that you don't have? A game's documentation must "reassure" the player as to what is happening. I don't think that there needs to be access to the exact figures. Such a solution would "bog" the game down. Players need to know or have a way of testing the "Why" that goes into a computer's move. Most of the games I have seen have very poor documentation. It borders on being non-existent or even, misleading.

A program should have an "After Action Report." This would allow players to see what happened that he couldn't see during the game. If the battle was one of the new "build your own" games, many might want to have a record of their campaign.

What about games where the tactical commanders change your attack orders. Players need to know why and how often these things happen. Are the changes random or what? Shouldn't players be able to count on certain units to "perform" in a pinch if the unit is "elite." Sometimes, the general could have noticed these changes in orders, sometimes not. If the change in orders was noticeable, I certainly think that the general should have the option to change commanders.

Subordinates should have minds of their own. History is full of examples where individual initiative won or lost the battle. But let players know who is doing what. Then, a player can promote good performers before the next battle or dismiss, shoot, or hang the Burnsides and suffer the political consequences. . . .

Ed Bever

Ed Bever is best noted for his work on Microprose's "Command Series"

In the bad old days of board wargaming, attempts to recreate the fog of war were usually so cumbersome that they detracted more from the game than they added. Inverted counters, "hidden movement" via off-board record keeping, and even duplicate boards separated by a screen were tried. Only the last achieved any real success.

In the brave new world of computer wargaming, designers have set off to rectify this situation with a vengeance. Now, units appear and disappear like phantoms; enemy strength estimates fluctuate according to hidden algorithmic tides; and the opposing commander is an inscrutable machine, wordlessly executing its programmed logic while displaying the ultimate poker face.



Ed Bever's Crusade In Europe

While I like and respect many of the computer wargame designs that have appeared in the last years, I think that most, including the *Command Series* that I helped design, have gone too far in attempting to recreate the fog of war. In my reading of military history, commanders seem to have been hindered far less by limited intelligence than by excessive intelligence. In very few instances that I can think of, has one side been completely unwarned of what the other was up to. Far more often, the problem was exactly the opposite: there were so many indications of so many possible enemy actions that the intelligence machinery got clogged or, even worse, the commander simply accepted the reading that confirmed his precon-

ceptions or validated his already chosen course of action.

When British paratroopers dropped into Arnhem, for example, they were surprised by and ultimately overwhelmed by the remnants of two SS Panzer divisions that had concentrated there to lick their wounds after the retreat from France. Their presence was treated afterwards as an unfortunate surprise, but, in fact, there were numerous indications that they were there before the paratroopers were committed to battle. Unfortunately, there were other places they were reported to be and there were indications that they had completely disintegrated, as well. The real problem was that Montgomery's staff was so infatuated with the Market-Garden plan that they chose to ignore the ominous indications and subscribe instead to the interpretation that validated their preference. The price was paid by the poor, bloody infantrymen.

Most computer wargames have gone too far in attempting to recreate the fog of war

Similarly, the cross-channel attack a few months before had surprised the Germans, not because they had no warning of it, but because they were unsure of where it would come. Hitler held back the Panzers for the first crucial hours because he feared the invasion was a feint. Then, he kept numerous infantry divisions tied down along the channel coast for months because he remained convinced that the real blow would come across at the Pas de Calais. Hitler maintained this misconception because the Allies deliberately fostered it, not by hiding away thousands of troops and tanks, but by displaying a phony army, a cadre of soldiers armed with an arsenal of props along the coast opposite Calais.

This deception suggests an important element in the fog of war that is often missed in computer game designs, as well as a way that it can be incorporated into them. The players should be able to deliberately deploy fake units in order to confuse the opponent. Hiding units should be possible—after all, the Germans did manage to achieve a high degree of secrecy before the Battle of the Bulge—but this should be more difficult to achieve and more fragile to maintain than deploying a few extra units that turn out to really be phantoms. This is a system that was occasionally used along with inverted counters in boardgames and it could easily be followed and expanded in the computer format.

Computer wargames can achieve a higher degree of realism, then, when they present the player, like a real commander, with plentiful intelligence, intelligence so plentiful that the problem becomes one of sifting through the possibilities in order to determine what is real and what only appears to be real. The danger in war comes more often not from what you don't see, but from what you think you see or what you want to see. Ultimately, the fog of war exists not on the battlefield, but in the commander's head. It is as much a product of information as ignorance.

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#32 - Interview with Alan Miller; Interview with Brian Moriarty; Lords of Conquest review and strategy notes; Alternate Reality; Battlefront; A Mind Forever Voyaging playing tips; Chessmaster 2000; Rommel-Battles For Tobruk; Bronze Dragon; and more!

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#43 - WARGAMING THEN & NOW - Shiloh:Grant's Trial; Border Zone; Mech Brigade Tactics; UMS Preview; High Seas; Darkhorn; Empire; Inside Trader; Legacy of The Ancients; Goodbye "G" Ratings Pt.3; Blackjack Academy; Into The Eagle's Nest; Airborne Ranger; and more!

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#45 - SCIENCE FICTION - Space Quest Tips; Space Arcade Games; Computer Games in 1988; The Future of Computer Games (Isaac Asimov, Harry Harrison, Douglas Adams, Jerry Pournelle, and others); Halls of Montezuma; Wasteland Sneak Preview; Skyfox II; Breach; SSI Company Report; Terrorpods; and more!



Reader Input Device #46

On this page, a number of games and articles are listed for evaluation, as well as some general interest questions. For each game which you have played or article which you have read, place a 1 (terrible) through 9 (outstanding) next to the appropriate number.

Games

1. Stealth Fighter (MicPr)
2. Starflight (EA)
3. Gunship (MicPr)
4. Might and Magic (NwWrld)
5. Pirates (MicPr)
6. Return of Werdna (SrTch)
7. Bard's Tale II (EA)
8. Faery Tale Adventure (Micll)
9. Legacy of Ancients (EA)
10. Legacy of Llygamyn (SrTch)
11. Borrowed Time (Actvsn)
12. Choplifter (Brdrbd)
13. Police Quest (Sierra)
14. World Games (Epyx)
15. Moebius (Origin)
16. Rogue (Epyx)
17. Trinity (Infcm)
18. Deathlord (EA)
19. Dungeon Master (FTL)
20. Airborne Ranger (MicPr)
21. Empire (Intstel)
22. Gettysburg (SSI)
23. Earl Wvr. Bsball (EA)
24. Battle of Antietam (SSI)
25. Rebel Charge (SSI)
26. War in So. Pac. (SSI)
27. Carriers at War (SSG)
28. Europe Ablaze (SSG)
29. Russia (SSG)
30. Crusade in Europe (MicPr)
31. Reach for Stars (SSG)
32. Shiloh (SSI)
33. Ace of Aces (Acclde)
34. Sons of Liberty (SSI)
35. Wooden Ships (AH)
36. Breach (Omnitrend)
37. Halls of Montezuma (SSG)
38. Panzer Strike (SSI)
39. Decisive Battles ACW (SSG)
40. Blue Powder, Grey (Garde)

Articles

41. Fog of War Article
42. Inside the Industry
43. World Games Review
44. Skate or Die Review
45. Strike Fleet Review
46. KnightOrc Review
47. Dungeon Master Review
48. Police Quest Review
49. Sherlock Hints
50. Sports Survey
51. Sons of Liberty Rev.
52. Ferrari Sneak Preview
53. Letters

Questions

54. Does your family own a Nintendo Entertainment System?



The Computer Gaming World Hall of Fame honors those games that over the course of time have proven themselves to be top rated games by the readers of CGW. Members of the CGW Hall of Fame are chosen by the staff of CGW. Once inducted into the Hall, the game will be retired from the current Game Ratings List. As a consumer you can be assured that any game in the CGW Hall of Fame is an all-time favorite.

Game Ratings

There was plenty of movement on the strategy side during the February rating period. As noted in CGW #45, "Empire" was indeed reconnoitering the top spot and the aliens have taken "Gettysburg" (which should be a big shock to Mr. Lincoln). Further, "Earl Weaver Baseball" didn't even need extra innings to move ahead of "Battle of Antietam" in the standings.

On the Action/Adventure side, the established titles haven't established firm radar contact on "Stealth Fighter," but "Starflight" accelerated the warp drive to jump past "Gunship" and gain some ground on the leader's electromagnetic profile. Werdna continued to exact revenge on his rivals as "Return of Werdna" slipped into fifth position and Microillusions used "Faery Tale Adventure" to enchant our readers and reach the top ten for the first time.

Strategy Top 50

Name	Mfg	Machine	Tms Rtd	Avg Rsp	Rating
Empire	Intstel	ST,I	2	30	7.68
Gettysburg	SSI	Many	10	50	7.61
Earl Weaver Bsball	EA	Am,I	3	36	7.45
Battle of Antietam	SSI	Many	9	43	7.23
Rebel Charge	SSI	Many	4	27	7.21
War in So. Pac.	SSI	Ap,C	3	20	7.18
Carriers at War	SSG	C,Ap	4	81	7.17
Europe Ablaze	SSG	C,Ap	6	36	7.17
Russia	SSG	Ap,C	5	30	7.18
Crusade in Europe	MicPr	Many	6	68	7.14
Seven Cities Gold	EA	Many	7	118	7.20
Reach for Stars	SSG	C,Ap	4	50	7.12
Battlefront	SSG	Ap,C	6	34	7.11
Battlegroup	SSI	C,Ap	3	37	7.11
Ancient Art of War	Brodr	I,M	8	34	7.10
Computer Baseball	SSI	All	6	36	7.10
Micro Lg Baseball	MicLg	All	3	34	7.09
Star Fleet I	Intstel	Many	5	38	7.08
Balance of Power	Mndscp	M,I	4	28	7.07
Colonial Conquest	SSI	C,At	3	60	7.07
Decision in Desert	MicPr	Many	9	36	7.06
Oper Mkt Garden	SSI	Many	4	58	7.06
Silent Service	MicPr	Many	6	108	7.06
Under Fire	AH	Ap	6	23	7.06
NFL Challenge	XOR	I,M	5	20	7.05
3-in-1 Football	Hafner	Many	2	20	7.05
Carrier Force	SSI	C,Ap,At	5	108	7.04
Flight Sim II	SubLg	Many	6	84	7.03
Anc Art War Sea	Brdrbd	I	3	26	7.01
Halls Montezuma	SSG	C,Ap	2	28	7.00
Breach	Omtrnd	Am,ST,I	2	35	6.99
Blue Powder, Grey	Garde	C,Ap	1	20	6.95
Defender Crown	MstDsg	Many	8	51	6.95
Lords of Conquest	EA	Many	3	42	6.93
Field of Fire	SSI	Ap,C,At	5	67	6.92
U.S.A.A.F.	SSI	C,Ap,At	2	26	6.92
Ace of Aces	Accld	Many	1	28	6.86
Roadwar 2000	SSI	Many	3	34	6.80
Computer Ambush	SSI	Many	6	49	6.78
Gato	SpHb	Many	3	79	6.77
Gulf Strike	AH	Many	4	33	6.75
Shiloh	SSI	Many	1	32	6.72
No. Atlantic '86	SSI	Ap,M	2	72	6.65
Conflict in Viet	SSI	Many	5	21	6.63
Battlecruiser	SSI	Ap,At,C	3	29	6.61
Knights of Desert	SSI	Many	5	63	6.61
Chickamauga	GDW	At,C	2	26	6.60
Warship	SSI	Ap,At,C	3	44	6.76
Fifth Eskadra	SimCan	Ap,C,ST	2	20	6.53
Computer Q-back	SSI	Ap,At,C	2	91	6.48

Adventure/Action Top 50

Name	Mfg	Machine	Tms Rtd	Avg Rsp	Rating
Stealth Fighter	MicPr	C	2	20	7.74
Starflight	EA	I	10	42	7.60
Gunship	MicPr	C, I	8	49	7.56
Might and Magic	NewWrd	Ap,C,I	8	41	7.53
Pirates	MicPr	C,Ap	4	34	7.49
Return of Werdna	SirTc	Ap	2	20	7.49
Bard's Tale II	EA	Ap,C	8	51	7.28
Faery Tale Adventure	Micrill	Many	1	43	7.21
Legacy Ancients	EA	Ap,C	2	49	7.21
Legacy of Llygamyn	SirTc	Ap,I	7	58	7.18
Knight of Diamonds	SirTc	Ap,I	11	55	7.17
Borrowed Time	Actvsn	Ap,C	1	27	7.15
Archon I	EA	Many	10	98	7.14
Choplifter	Brdrbnd	Ap,C	4	79	7.13
One on One	EA	Many	7	74	7.13
Phantasie	SSI	Many	10	68	7.13
Elite	Fireb	C,Ap,I	5	45	7.10
Spellbreaker	Infcm	Many	5	24	7.09
Zork Series	Infcm	Many	7	122	7.09
Pinball Const. Set	EA	Many	4	47	7.08
Lode Runner	EA	Many	6	60	7.07
Questron	SSI	C,Ap,At	6	90	7.07
Sorcerer	Infcm	Many	5	58	7.07
Phantasie II	SSI	Many	6	36	7.07
Wizard's Crown	SSI	Many	11	58	7.07
World Class Ldr Bd	Access	C	3	23	7.04
Enchanter	Infcm	Many	4	45	7.02
Eternal Dagger	SSI	Ap,At,C	3	28	7.00
Ultima II	Orign	Ap	8	61	7.00
Airborne Ranger	MicPr	C	2	29	6.98
Leather Goddesses	Inf	Many	2	31	6.98
Winter Games	Epyx	Many	1	37	6.97
Ultima I	Orign	Ap,C	2	48	6.96
Auto Duel	Orign	Many	2	65	6.95
Moebius	Orign	Many	1	21	6.95
Deadline	Infcm	Ap,At,I	3	44	6.94
Rogue	Epyx	Many	1	26	6.92
King's Quest II	Sierra	Ap,ST,I	3	20	6.88
Hitchhiker's Guide	Infcm	Many	4	108	6.86
Planetfall	Infcm	Many	3	51	6.86
Trinity	Infcm	Many	1	22	6.82
Beyond Zork	Infcm	Many	2	30	6.80
Summer Games	Epyx	Many	2	35	6.79
Wishbringer	Infcm	Many	3	36	6.79
Racing Dest Set	EA	C,At	3	49	6.78
Phantasie III	SSI	Many	2	26	6.76
Hardball	Accld	Many	8	43	6.73
Marble Madness	EA	Many	2	20	6.71
Adventure Con. Set	EA	Many	3	57	6.72
Archon II	EA	C,Ap,At	4	76	6.64



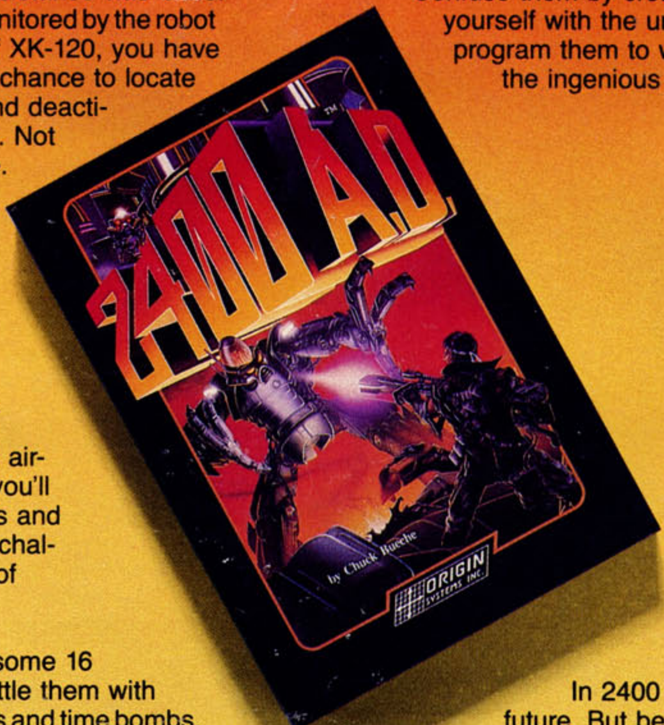
Want to be a hero?

Every last member of the resistance has either been captured or is closely monitored by the robot patrol. As a new inhabitant of XK-120, you have no police record. You have a chance to locate the central control console and deactivate the robot control system. Not a good chance, but a chance.

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On your mission, you'll face some 16 types of animated robots. Battle them with weapons like phasers, blasters and time bombs.



Confuse them by creating a duplicate image of yourself with the unique holoprojector. Or reprogram them to work for you by mastering the ingenious Directive Override option.



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